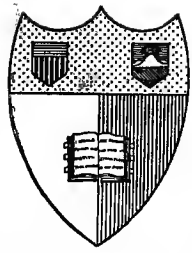
BY THE STAGE DOOR



Cornell University Library

Ithaca, New York

FROM THE

BENNO LOEWY LIBRARY

COLLECTED BY

BENNO LOEWY

1854-1919

BEQUEATHED TO CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Cornell University Library
PS 3531.A8765B9

By the stage door,

3 1924 021 657 097

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924021657097

BY THE STAGE DOOR

BY THE STAGE DOOR

By

ADA PATTERSON

&

VICTORY BATEMAN

The GRAFTON PRESS
NEW YORK

~~7888~~
~~D302~~

A 592800

Copyright, 1902, by The Grafton Press

First Impression, September, 1902

TO

Miss Georgie Drew Mendum

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Story of a Friendship	1
Autobiography of an Actress	23
The Passing of the Leading Lady	51
Her One Superstition	81
Grimston's School of Acting	101
A Triumph of Temperament	123
He Married an Actress	141
Three Friends	151
The Understudy	165
Heard at the Managers' Club	179
An Early Jump	201

INTRODUCTION

THESE stories of the stage are strong and true. Not once are they overdrawn. Not once is their realism sacrificed to the straining after effect too common in literature. The book is a faithful portraiture of the lights and shades of life as we players know it. As fiction it would be superior to most of the output of the day, but it is not fiction; it is fact. Every character has lived. Every incident has happened. I know some of the heroes and heroines in the flesh, and I have been present when some of the events herein set down have occurred. I commend this book to every seeker after knowledge of the stage and to every student of character, be he such a seeker or not.

ANNIE A. ADAMS.

LIFE

Life is too short to quarrel;
Life is too brief to sigh—
Too sweet to be always moral,
Too pleasant to daily decry;
Too sunny to always be grieving,
Too precious to fling it away—
Too sad to laugh from the leaving
The crib to the bed in clay.

Life is too strange for any
To fathom, to comprehend;
Life is so gloomy that many
Hope and look for the end.
Life is too fleeting to worry,
Too solemn to joke by the way,
Too joyously dreaming to hurry
To-day into yesterday.

Life

Life is so full of laughter,
Of joy and sorrow and tears—
Of meetings and partings—that after
All, a play it appears—
Tragedy—comedy—pathos,
Entrances, exits and strife;
Charity, sentiment, pathos,
Shifting scenes—quick curtain—life.

—Victory Bateman.

The Story of a Friendship

The Story of a Friendship

THE stage, which knows more and deeper friendships than any other profession, has known but one such friendship as this.

It began in a curious fashion, even for the profession of surprises. Miss Grenville's sister, who had stage ambitions, without stage aptitude, was looking for an engagement. Miss Grenville, who had no such ambitions, was calling on the managers with her sister to give her countenance and moral support. It was at noon, after they had made their pilgrimage to sixteen offices of agents and managers and had heard as many times the decisive "Nothing," that they made a final, weary call upon John Bailey, and the friendship, of which this is a history, began.

John Bailey's office was dark and dreary. His personality might have been described in the same way. His face was pale, brooding, and impassive. Some non-admirer had added the adjective "damp." He forgot to take off his hat while he was talking with them. It was a villanous old hat, lowering, weather-beaten, sinister, like some faces she had seen, an unusual, absurd hat, and Miss Grenville, while the manager was saying the usual "Nothing" to her sister, studied it and laughed aloud.

It was rude, but she was seventeen.

John Bailey looked up from a letter he was opening.

"Do you want to go on the stage?" he asked, brusquely.

"No, thank you." He looked at her more sharply. There was a slight drawl in the low-pitched voice, a dragging upon the vowels, that was individual and charming. She had fine eyes, too, gray, like still pools, with a sly roguery in their depths, and with a sudden light in them that brightened irregular feat-

ures. She was ungainly and tall, an overgrown child, but his quick managerial eye told him she was different from anyone he had ever seen, and he was looking for the "different" people for his stage.

"Why not?"

"I have never thought of such a thing."

"That is no reason why you should not think of it."

"My sister here——"

"I have nothing for your sister. Why don't you think of it?"

"I shouldn't like to be anything else than a great actress."

"Perhaps you might be. Strange things happen," dryly.

"Laugh again! I would give $100 a week for that laugh."

"Thank you!" still with that sudden lighting of the eyes and that delicious drawl. "If I ever wish to I will let you know."

As they went out of the room, her sister crestfallen, Anna Grenville puzzled and a bit pleased, the girl looked back for a moment.

Dark, earnest eyes were peering at her from beneath the absurd hat, eyes so earnest, so frankly and not unkindly taking account of her, that she forgot to laugh at the hat. And he saw more than the awkward girl with fine eyes and dragging speech. He saw the bud unfold, the woman that was to be, the actress that might be. In a dimly pleasant way they understood each other. The girls went down the dark stairs.

The manager went back to his letter. And so the friendship began, a friendship of thought, for is not friendship the essence of kindly thought? And is not the difference between happiness and unhappiness only a difference in quantity of that essence?

He remembered her as a laughing, awkward slant of sunshine that had fallen athwart the dimness of his office a moment and disappeared. She remembered the hat with a laugh, and the brooding, not unkindly, eyes beneath them, with a smile of childish softness.

It was six months afterward that they met

again. He had gone to Philadelphia to see the opening of "By Land and Sea." Was it possible that that tall, rather awkward "walking lady" or "extra woman" was she? And the voice! It was not long afterward that an Oriental said of it: "It is far reaching as the temple gong at midnight, rich, mellow, and of inexpressible sweetness." The listening manager could not mistake it. She, looking into the dim space marked by sheeted undulations that would resolve themselves into chairs at the evening performance, saw the grotesque hat and smiled with the gratification of a child.

Meeting her in the wings afterward, he lifted the hat gravely. "So you have concluded to go on the stage?"

"Only for to-night. Mr. Downs, the manager, is my brother-in-law. One of his 'walking ladies' was ill and he asked me to take her place."

He watched her from the front that night. Her walk, her gestures, her smile, all but the last faulty, yet distinguished her from the

rest. She was taller than the others. She was one of the fourteen walking ladies at whom the audience continued to look after a cursory glance at the rest, though no one could have told why.

John Bailey met her in the wings again. "I want you to join my company," he said. "I think I could make an actress of you."

"If my family are willing I will."

The next week she was rehearsing a tiny part in the twilight of the theatre in whose gloomy office she had met John Bailey. Sitting on a lounge near the right entrance, as was his custom, he watched her without seeming to look at her. She was intelligent. She caught suggestions eagerly and improved upon them. She did more instead of less than she was asked to do with a line or a bit of business. If "let alone" he found her acting naturally and with taste. She never "saved herself." A rehearsal was a stern reality, into which she threw all her young strength.

"I haven't made a mistake," the manager said to himself after the third rehearsal. "She

is outward. Nothing inward or repressed about her. I can make her," and with a grim earnestness he added, "and she may do a good deal toward making me."

It was the night of the full-dress rehearsal that John Bailey noticed a thoughtful look on the girl's face while she glanced about the stage, set for the first act. It expressed dissatisfaction. He, too, felt that there was some spot of inharmony in the scene.

"You don't like it?" he asked, from the shabby lounge which the company called his "throne."

She started, but he saw with pleasure that it was the start of surprise, not of fear.

"There is one thing I don't like," she said, calmly.

"What is it?"

"I think the window should be left centre, giving a view of the lane."

"M—m—m!" was his comment. But on the opening night of the performance the window had been moved "left centre."

From that time "stage hints" were a part

of Miss Grenville's duties. She never volunteered them. The "Governor" had only to watch her expressively irregular features to know whether he had missed the note of dramatic justice.

"The girl has become my sixth sense," he said, but not shamefacedly, to himself. The "Governor" was never ashamed to receive or act upon suggestions.

After six months with the John Bailey Refined Comedy Company, Miss Grenville decided that she liked being an actress. She had forgotten that she wanted to be a great actress. She was content to be a good one.

A visiting manager spoke to John Bailey about her.

"Not pretty, not graceful," he said, "but a 'find.' Will you loan her to me for 'A Tragedy of the Sea,' Bailey?"

"Not for any consideration."

"Why? You have given her a small part."

"Yes, but I'll give her bigger ones."

The visiting manager was not content with

that. The next morning Miss Grenville received a note asking her to come to his office. Her card was sent in and she was bidden to pass the long line of waiting players. Of what occurred in the manager's office she made a vivid story for John Bailey's ears at the matinée.

"And you told him you wouldn't go at double the salary?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

The girl was silent. She was searching her heart for a reason.

"I don't believe I know," she said, looking at him with confiding frankness, "but it did not seem possible that I should ever leave your company unless you wished it."

He was rarely non-committal, even for a manager. He said nothing. But he smiled with a beautifying flash of the grave face, and the next week the treasurer handed her an envelope of astonishing contents. John Bailey had reached the rival bidder's figure. Anna Grenville's salary had been doubled.

She was appointed understudy for the leading woman.

It was at the close of her first season with the Refined Comedy Company that Miss Grenville was invited to dine with Mr. and Mrs. John Bailey at their home on Forty-third Street, just off the Avenue. Several managers and their families and some famous actors were guests. The habitual look of surprise deepened in Anna Grenville's girlish eyes. Why had so signal an honor been done her, and why did they look at her with oddly mixed curiosity and respect?

It was after the women had left the table that she might have been enlightened had she been permitted to stay behind. It was in answer to a Boston manager's question that John Bailey gave the enlightenment.

"I expect much from her because she is bigger than her work. She has a genius for interest and enjoyment. She is bigger than any rôle she will ever play. She has brains and heart, sentiment and temperament. Gentlemen, here's to the greatest of my discov-

eries!" The sages of the footlights clinked and drained their glasses, while Anna Grenville was looking at the splendid raiment of the women with keen enjoyment.

The least favored of his guests having gone, John Bailey asked the half dozen who remained to go to his library. Anna Grenville followed them with awe. Few had entered John Bailey's library. It was known that he had said none but those he loved and trusted might enter there. His reception-room for the many, his drawing-room for the fewer, his dining-room even for some whom he merely wished to please. But the room of his thoughts, the spot where he dreamed before he did, where he marshalled in the air the casts, the settings, the lines, the very voices for every production long before he read the play to his company, or the newspapers had announced the possibility of such a production! No one should pass its door who by any possibility could profane it by a hostile thought.

Anna Grenville drew in her breath with de-

light as she made a quick survey of the four walls of books, the master's great oaken desk and leathern chair, a statue of "Art"—the bas-relief in the corner caught her fancy. She wandered from the others for a nearer view. It was a roughly carved group of infinite strength, a man and a woman who seemed trying to break from the stone that held them. They had been groping their way blindly, impelled by they knew not what, and now they were reaching across the impassable space and looking at each other with the dawn of a wonderful understanding. The sculptor, George Grey Barnard, had named it "Friendship." The girl's eyes went wide with delight. Then they softened with tears. John Bailey looked at her with a half-smile in his eyes.

"You like it?" he said. She nodded because she could not answer otherwise, but he saw in her eyes the marvel and delight in the eyes of that woman who lived in stone. And she saw in his the fierce desire, tempered with the sublimity and tenderness of that man of marble. John Bailey went back to his guests.

Anna Grenville turned to a woman who asked if she might take her home in her carriage. But in both a delightful sense of nearness was stirring. So was their friendship cemented by understanding.

Thereafter their lives were a beautiful unity, for they knew the delight of one aim. She lent herself to the classic because he believed it was his mission to produce old plays as their masters would have had them produced, in the exact spirit and aroma of their time. Her art became her religion. He said of her: "She approaches a new rôle reverently as though she were going to prayer." She travelled with his family in their between-season pilgrimages, and saw new lands, new peoples, and new plays through his eyes. After she became the star of his principal company, he was the first of two competitors to bring a famous poetic drama to this country. The critics from a dozen cities journeyed to the quiet one where the play opened. They were unanimous in their condemnation. "Mr. Bailey had sacrificed the great poem to make

a great part of the one which the poet had made insignificant, the leading female rôle, played by Miss Grenville," they agreed. Mr. Bailey's version failed; that of his rival, in which the sense of proportion had been preserved, succeeded. But the sacrifices of this friendship were not one-sided. As the star of the actress neared the zenith, manager after manager led her to the mountain-top and bade her look upon the fortune that would follow her did she join their forces. But the prospect held no temptations.

She looked at the managers in wonder and said merely "No."

It was not strange that at the meeting of two such strong personalities a few sparks of dissension should be struck off. It was during their first London season that they had a short, hot quarrel. It was coincident with the appearance and disappearance of the Duke.

The Duke would have placed his estates beneath the feet of this new American eccentric comedienne, his Nell Gwyn re-born. Perhaps she was a bit dazed by the splen-

dor of it. No woman but has a thrill of delight at fancying herself a Duchess. She dallies joyously with the may-be, even though she knows it will depart into the might-have-been. It was at this feminine mental stage that there was a fierce half-hour in the manager's office. Thereafter the ducal carriage disappeared from before the stage door and the ducal cards no longer accompanied a rain of flowers. The episode was one agreed to be forgotten.

All good as well as evil things have their attendant shadows. The penalty of absorbing friendships is that they set their possessors apart from all others. They have something of the isolation of genius. Octopus-like, they absorb thought and time. There are times when the sense of this is poignant.

Such a night was that on which Anna Grenville believed she had failed as Viola. In vain did the principals of the company follow her to her dressing-room and praise her from their hearts. She threw herself upon her lounge and refused to be comforted. When

the rest had gone she crept to a carriage and said: "To the Park!" For hours the cabman drove, waiting for the signal "Home" from his fare. It came not, and just as the gray of mist and lake were mingling at dawn he left his box and peered into the carriage. Anna Grenville had cried herself to sleep.

But the friendship never faltered. When the public taste ebbed away from the classic to the modern it carried manager and star from the handsome uptown to a tawdry downtown theatre; but they went out with the tide together. When the revulsion of feeling came and swept them into a splendid new playhouse, finer than the one they had lost, they were still swimming abreast. The public taste was fickle, and with it their fortunes soared or grovelled.

So twenty years passed, and to round off well the cycle of achievement the scholars and artists of his city gave John Bailey a banquet. They called him many things, which in their sum meant "master of his art." And he, replying, said:

"What a debt does the manager owe the actor! Managers have not the reputation of recognizing this obligation. It would be entirely unjust to complain of the want of it in the janitor-manager, for he is not expected to know what an actor is. He deals with combinations only, and may know as little of their component parts as he does of the parts of his watch. It is sufficient for him that they go. I speak of the manager who has trained men and women to the higher walks of the drama, who have been more pleased to see the first dawn of promise in a beginner than to see growing houses, who had exulted to see his company play to great audiences, not because it means so much profit, but because it was the highest public appreciation of his creation, and the creation of the manager is the perfectly acted performance.

"For the men and women who have fulfilled his expectations in their allotted parts, nay, who have carried his idea farther than his own dream of his possibilities, and made his plays, his productions, and his theatre loved and fa-

vored—for them the manager has only testimony of praise. And on this theme one might be pardoned for dwelling, since it is the one which the public has most at heart. And it is the merest justice for me to name one who is inseparably associated with the fame of my theatre—with whose bright and gracious personality the charm of the performance seems inseparably linked, who began with the smallest parts in that company which you have been pleased to call famous, and who has enchanted two continents; who in her twenty years of arduous work has never disappointed her public, has never been but the kind comrade to her fellow-players, has ever been the pattern of loyalty to the theatre in which she served, and who in the midst of her greatest triumphs has forgotten self; this occasion, in which you in so signal a way honor her manager, should also be one of especial honor to Miss Grenville."

At the close of that season the manager and his family sailed for Europe. Miss Grenville, as usual, went with them.

"This is rest," he sighed, as he drew his dark steamer rug about him and looked out at the gray waters. Was it the gray of the waters or the deep brown of the rug that gave him the pallor, those shadows under his eyes?

The actress's eyes threw that question across him at his wife. Mrs. Bailey's lips formed the words "Only tired." And the two women watched beside him as he slept the day away in the deck-chair. The next day he did not leave his stateroom, and the ship surgeon hovered about it anxiously for the rest of the voyage. In London, though, he grew steadily weaker and begged that he be taken out of the British fogs into the sunshine of Paris. With the babble of the cheerful city in his ears he still lay seemingly sleeping.

"Ill? No, just tired," he said to visitors, and sank again into the strange drowsiness.

Looking up from his pillow he saw two watching women. On one side his wife, on the other his friend. He tried to raise his hand from the cover. He would have grasped the hand of one, they did not know which, for

he looked from one to the other dully and back again. Then his eyes closed.

"If I fall asleep, don't wake me," he said. There was no need.

His will was accurate, painstaking, and conscientious as his productions. He was generous to his widow, kind to his relatives, not forgetful of those charities which had had his ear. To Miss Anna Grenville he left a large percentage of the profits of his plays and his theatre. He added a further bequest:

"The furniture of my office I leave to Miss Anna Grenville in remembrance of many years in which I have been benefited by her unselfish interest in my concerns."

Miss Grenville first retired to the quiet of Kensington. She said she would never again act. But quiet without may only fan the storm within.

"I will play," she said. "I must play."

John Bailey's chief rival, a man who produced "shows" rather than plays, came into the quiet of the Kensington garden one day and begged her to head one of his companies.

"At your own terms," he added.

But she, drawing her gaze from the distance into which she had been looking while he talked, answered, as she had answered him years before, merely "No."

To a lesser manager, whose ideals were those and whose friendship had been that of the dead manager, she said "Yes."

Those who saw her the next season were amazed, pained, wondering. Her acting was a travesty of her playing of the past.

What had gone out of that beautiful soul, leaving a shell behind? She played as though half aroused from a dream. The manager, perplexed, apologized for the plays, condemning his own choice.

Anna Grenville permanently retired. She is living, I had almost said waiting, in the quiet house at Kensington. There is an inward peace now like that outer. So ended this friendship, if such a friendship ever ends.

Autobiography of an Actress

Autobiography of an Actress

ORN on the stage" would apply to the manner of my coming into the world. As nearly, at least, as it would to anyone, for that is a figurative phrase more particularly descriptive of our parents than of us.

My father was a non-professional. My mother an actress. Six months before I was born they separated, for reasons that did not reflect upon my mother. She applied for a divorce, and worked harder than ever, so that she might not only earn her living, but pay the lawyer for her freedom. She did the hard work of a stock actress in the bad old days when they put on four Shakespearian productions a week, with an occasional melodrama thrown in, and she hadn't much time

or money to waste on ruffled, lacy things for me, good old mumsey!

But she cried when the nurse laid me, a red lump of appetite and clamor, in her arms, and said: "You'll help me to live, won't you, little one?"

And that was the beginning of a loyal comradeship that lasted thirty years. Without an interruption, too, although there might have been one once, and it came about in a strange way. It was when I was seventeen.

Mamma was playing character parts in Pittsburg, and I had just left Cincinnati, after a riffle with the manager. There was a photograph of a very handsome man in her dressing-room.

"Who is that?" I said.

"John Harmon, a friend of mine in New York. He is Rosa Elton's manager."

I was leaving for New York the next day and the man in the picture made me resourceful.

"I will tell you what to do if you are wor-

ried about my being in New York alone," I suggested. "Telegraph that man to meet me." And so she did.

He met me at the station. I thought he was the handsomest and most agreeable man I had ever known. He was very nice to me.

"What are you going to do to-morrow?" he asked me, after we had reached my boarding-house.

"I think I will shop in the afternoon."

"Then I'll take you to the shops."

We saw each other every day after that until Mumsey came back, and when I told her about it she cried and wouldn't tell me why. Then he didn't come for nearly a week, although some letters arrived for her addressed in his handwriting. And she was mopey and locked herself in a great deal, complaining of headache. Dear Mumsey! I did not know until years after we went to the Little Church Around the Corner and were married that she and John Harmon were as good as engaged when I met him. John told me in one

of those conjugal confidences that have such harrowing results, and I never liked him quite so well afterward.

But this is a long way from where I set out. I was telling about Mumsey's welcoming me in that queer way. When I was three weeks old she had to begin playing again, and when I was two months old she used to take me to the theatre when they played matinées. The women in the company took turns at taking care of me while she was on. I liked it from the first and never cried once. So, from playing around the dressing-rooms, and even pulling the manager's whiskers, it came about very naturally that I should make an early début.

It happened when I was four years old. I was the child of the heroine, and was told to "just play around the room as if you were at home." When I was at home I always "played around" my mother, climbing about her dress and swinging from the arms of her chair and trying to reach and play with her hair. I followed the stage man-

ager's instructions and tried to "play around" as I was used to doing. When Miss Edith Linton, the leading woman, made her exit she caught me in the wings and shook me. "Don't ever spoil my scene again, you little beast!"

A little thing, do you think? If it hadn't been for a big-hearted actor, as broad as she was petty, it would have ruined me as an actress.

Dear old Pop Cranston! My next attempt was with him in "Blue Jeans." You know the scene in which he bids everybody "good-by"? I had seen my mother play a part the night before, in which she cried a regular gale, and I felt a consuming ambition to do the same. That same ambition held me on the stage after he had bade us good-by, and I should have exited with the rest. I ran back to where he stood and clutched the seam of his trousers and screamed and sobbed more good-byes. It stopped the action of the piece, but the audience, seeing real tears in my eyes, cried too, and the scene "went."

The stage manager liked the "new business," and kept it in as long as we played "Blue Jeans." Pop Cranston called at the theatre two blocks away, where my mother was playing, and told her I had made a "hit."

Dear old man! Thus he restored my lost confidence and spontaneity, and, I say it in genuine seriousness, saved me as an actress.

I never forgot Edith Linton's harshness. Years afterward she wanted to join the company in which I was leading woman. Hearing of it, I told the manager it must be she or I, not she and I. She did not join the company. Wrong, now, wasn't it, but human?

When I have played with children myself I have tried to be most careful of their feelings, and to encourage them to be natural. It is a crime against art to snuff out a child's individuality as that woman would have destroyed mine.

For three years I played only special engagements in Philadelphia, where I was born and where I lived at a convent when I was

not playing. My mother could not always stay in Philadelphia. Her companies were usually "on the road," so that nearly a year passed sometimes when she could not come to see me. It would have been a lonely life without the good, black-robed sisters. When I was eight years old I went "on the road" in my mother's company, playing a boy's part, and that was practically the end of my school life. The members of the company helped my mother to teach me such things as I needed to know, and probably some that I could have gotten on very well without. For instance, in that haphazard education of mine there was something mightily needful left out. Every one of my well-meaning preceptors left it to the others to teach me that self-control is the corner-stone of character, and that without it no structure will stand. What I did learn while I was not learning this potent thing was that if I was stormy enough and persistent enough everyone would yield to my wish—for a time.

Perhaps the greatest fun I had during

that Bedouin life was when I was ten years old and a little friend of the same age in the company and I played the part of two old gypsy crones and our mothers were gay young girls, who giggled and danced about us and whose fortunes we told.

I learned to travel all day without food on the "big jumps" out West.

I learned that it was a not unusual thing to arrive in one town at three in the morning and leave at six.

I learned the disciplinary value of cold rooms and cheap food in bad hotels.

I learned that "the carriage into which the actress stepped and ordered the coachman to drive her down the avenue to her hotel" was a golden myth confined to dime novels. Before I was twelve I had learned the grim prose of plodding through snowdrifts as high as my waist to and from play-houses because the storm had stopped the street-car service and mamma and I could not afford a carriage.

And I had learned the loneliness of the

actor's life and the craving to put out one's hands to whomever might grasp them to spare one's self the horrors of loneliness.

And I had learned that multiplied stage motto, "Work! work! work!"

I learned my own method of studying a part. Everyone has a different one. Mine was to be entirely alone, except for the tables and chairs in my room, and even their company I found inconvenient sometimes, because I fell over them in the heat of my acting. I studied my part and acted it the same time, addressing the chairs and tables as my friends and enemies, as the part required. Of course they had sharp edges, instead of the presumable curves of the real people, and I was sometimes bruised by contact with them, but the black-and-blue spots were among the sacrifices laid upon the altar of art, and I never rued them.

To regard a manager in the same light as a landlady, as a suppressor of individuality and a restricter of liberty, was one of the things I learned which I should never have

learned, for what begins as mere opinion often eventuates as fact.

And so, after eight years of life "on the road," with occasional intervals in stock companies in the West and South, and playing children and old women, and all the grades of age and emotion between, the supreme hour had come. It was the opening night of my first New York engagement.

My part was a sympathetic one, and I never played better, in spite of "first-night" nervousness. I am not sure that I was nervous. There was much more of the spirit of the queen coming to her throne. I had so many sweetly prophetic friends who had said, "Once get a hearing in New York, and you will make the greatest hit ever made on Broadway," that I thoroughly believed it. My serene self-confidence could not be shaken after the fourteen curtain calls I received that night.

As we walked home from the theatre the man whom I afterward married said: "Lucy, you're made. You'll have offers from twen-

ty managers by every mail." Again I believed. I always was so trusting. And I believed the more when I read the papers next morning. Everyone praised my work and talked about my "intelligence," my "beauty," and my "magnetic charm." One snarling old sheet the other papers called "Grandma" said: "She will be a Broadway star within two years."

What followed? Nothing. We went on the road in the play, and so far as I could learn were forgotten in New York. We seemed to have been lost in the South. When our season closed I came back to look for that permanent place in the fixed affections of Broadway. I didn't find it waiting for me, and I had to make the rounds of managers and agents as though I had never had those fourteen curtain calls and all those notices.

Being ambitious and believing I was "made," I went first to see the manager who stood for the classic, often at a heavy loss to all concerned, though there was prestige in his name. I found him a dark man in the

dark office of a dark theatre. He hardly looked at me.

"You might do for the juvenile of the new production," he said, while he read a letter. "I'll give you $25 a week."

"Did you say $125?" A thrill of hope fought with a frightful sinking in my heart.

"I said $25."

"But I get $100 on the road, and am offered $110 in the Indianapolis stock. My mother is an invalid and I am sending her to Europe next week. I can't manage on less than——"

"Your private affairs don't interest me, young woman. I can get plenty of society girls at that figure. Good-morning!"

From the temple of the classic I went to a then famous producer who would give me a splendid part in what promised to be a big metropolitan success. He offered me $30 a week. I had visions of pawning some old stage dresses and my few jewels and getting on with the $30 for a while. Mr. Mackay promised that if I "made good" he would

increase the salary "as much as was consistent." For a moment hope danced dazzlingly before me; then I'll have to admit, leading lady or no leading lady, I cried in the manager's office, for I had forgotten mumsey. She must go to that specialist in Berlin. The manager had unfolded the blank contract and was filling it out while I cried there miserably behind my veil. He waited for me to sign it.

"Make it fifty."

I might live in a cheap boarding-house and sell my sealskin that I had bought to impress managers with my prosperity, for managers do measure you by your clothes.

"Thirty or nothing."

"Good-morning, then!"

What was the use of telling him about mamma? The sunny offices were just as indifferent as the dark ones to suffering, sad mammas.

A third manager admitted me so promptly and greeted me so kindly that I was sure the fourteen curtain calls had had their influence.

He offered me a better salary than the others and was just unrolling the contract when the leading man came in. He looked uncomfortable when he saw me, although I nodded pleasantly, and would have shaken hands if he had come near enough.

He went around the other side of the desk, and, leaning over, whispered to Mr. Elkins.

The manager said, "Excuse me one moment," and they went into another room and talked in a low tone. Mr. Elkins came back and rolled up the blank contract again.

"I am sorry," he said, "but Mr. Palmerton has personal reasons for not wanting to engage you. As he is financially interested in the production I must respect his objections."

It was not until I had told the strange story to one of the know-alls of the Rialto that the light came. Palmerton, I knew, had called often at a theatrical boarding-house where I had stayed last season. Everyone knew he was enslaved by a devil-may-care dancing girl, who was one of the boarders.

That was dangerous knowledge for one who was to play in the same company with his wife. So it was that I lost my most promising New York engagement. The girl who proved that "ignorance is bliss" "made good" in the part and has since become a Broadway star. I sent mumsey to Europe and joined the Indianapolis stock.

From that time I date my "theatrical ruin," for I am convinced that anyone who does stock company work for more than five years is ruined, so far as high-class work goes. Her methods must become crude and sloppy. For a few years I played six evenings and two matinée performances a week. Then the demand came for two performances a day. It was an economic measure. The managers of the houses reduced their rates of admission by half and had to double their performances to make the same profit as before. The bill was changed every week. We played on Sundays in the Western cities. That made fourteen performances each week. We rehearsed all morning for the next week's

production. There was no other time to study my part for the following week than at midnight after the performance. Often it was hard to rid my mind of the heavy, emotional parts I had played that night and get down to studying the new part. By the time I have cleared my mind of the part of the present week and the part we were rehearsing for the next, and actually gotten into the study of the part for the next but one, daylight would be creeping in past the window-shades and mocking my flickering gas-jets. My sleep would be short and disturbed by the three combating parts. I would awake depressed from exhaustion and oppressed by the terrible foreboding of every leading man or woman in stock, the fear that our memories would be paralyzed by overwork. I have seen that direful thing happen to a score of my associates in a few years. Sometimes a few weeks' rest restored their memories and made them over. But the warning frightened them, and whenever it was possible those who had the warning got

out of stock or out of the profession. Many I have seen go to the insane asylum, where, dazed, unseeing what is going on about them, they are still searching for the lost thread.

Do you know how many words a leading woman in a stock company has to memorize in a season? Take a season of twenty weeks. I have saved the memoranda of one average season. Here are the parts I played and the number of words in each:

Mrs. Winthrop in "Young Mrs. Winthrop"	7,000
Floradilla in "A Fool's Revenge"	6,750
Louise in "The Two Orphans"	7,250
Cecile in "David Laroque"	6,500
Adrienne in "A Celebrated Case"	7,000
Camille in "Camille"	7,300
Carmen in "Carmen"	7,200
Portia in "Julius Cæsar"	6,500
Eliza in "Uncle Tom's Cabin"	7,500
Ruth in "The Wages of Sin"	6,000
Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet"	7,500
Dora in "Diplomacy"	6,900

Portia in "The Merchant of Venice"	7,600
Ophelia in "Hamlet"	7,000
Mrs. Gregory Graxin in "The Tragedy"	6,500
Desdemona in "Othello"	7,000
Alice in "Spite of All"	7,500
Frou-Frou in "Frou-Frou"	7,000
Vera in "Moths"	6,000
Roxane in "Cyrano"	8,000
Total	140,000

But figures are not always convincing. You are not sure what 140,000 words mean to you, are you? Let me make it clearer. The average number of words in a novel is 60,000. There are 120,000 in "Les Miserables," and about the same number in "Quo Vadis." That would make 166 3-4 feet of solid type and 100 columns, or 14 pages of a large newspaper. This in five months, besides the wear and tear of two performances a day, the weariness of daily rehearsals, the worry of new parts, and the unescapable fric-

tion with the manager and company in producing new pieces. And the collisions with the ignorant dressmakers and careless wardrobe women, for the costuming may make or ruin a part. Add to this the family cares that are intensified by a neurotic's point of view. I am yet to be convinced that there is any punishment reserved for our sins hereafter.

Perhaps I should have explained before that I had long ago become a widow. My husband, like other humans, had his good and bad points. "God rest his shade!" You would have to know much that I cannot in mercy say of the dead to understand and not blame when I say that there was a sense of relief mingled with my natural tears at his funeral. Enough to know that the deepest hurts this world has given me came from my husband's hand. Mamma, though a confirmed invalid, was left to me for five years after, and how glad I was to work hard for her, remembering that fretful, red baby that she had welcomed so tenderly in Philadelphia,

now a good many years ago. At last this faithful friend was taken, too.

I was free to go to New York and work for a small salary, if need be, and be that late-in-arrival but still predicted Broadway star. I had not saved any money. The home drains had been heavy. Besides, I never knew a stock actress, no matter what her salary, who saved money. Her new stage clothes every week cost from a third to a half of her salary. If she accepts any social attentions she must return them. The luncheons and dinners she gives to admiring and troublesome society women cost a good part of her salary. She ought to forego all these unprofitable functions, but she doesn't, because she considers them a "business investment." Huge mistake! The illusion of mystery is a thousand times more profitable than romance-dispelling knowledge about you by the public.

So my capital was my experience. It was a telling one. I was much older than the one-part-a-year actress at thirty. A nerve specialist had told me that the strain of stock

work would ruin my health and steal my beauty. But what could I do? There was mumsey until last season.

Agents and managers cared nothing about my experience in the West and South. "You'll have to demonstrate your ability all over again in New York," they said, with an unpleasant smile. "Very few memories go back twelve years."

O, those thrilling, forgotten fourteen curtain calls!

The managers and agents made a good many references to "young girls." Wasn't a woman a girl now at thirty? I glanced at a shop window one morning. A pale, anxious-faced woman was looking frowningly at me. She looked as if she had dressed hurriedly. She walked nervously, yet as though she was tired. With a shock I recognized my own gown, finally my own face. How long since the papers had called me a beauty? The nerve specialist was right.

Yet I had to go back to another year of stock. There was nothing else "open." The

next season it was the same. That was the season that I had my warning.

I had become irritable without just cause.

I had no longer any interest in my friends.

I was always "too tired to go anywhere."

I had sudden attacks of blindness and dizziness.

I had sharp pains in the back of my head.

My work, that I had always loved, had grown hateful to me.

I slept little and I had strange, wild dreams.

My lines came haltingly.

Until then I had always scorned stimulants, but now I reminded myself of a lame beggar who needed a crutch. When the men in the company talked about "bracers" and "pick-me-ups" I had a wild craving for them. I must have something to carry me through to the end—what end?

It was then I read about Mollie Shannon's death in San Francisco; such a sad death. I can't bear to write about it. Only the de-

spatches told how she had tired of the stock companies in which she had been leading woman for twenty years and joined any fly-by-night company that would take her. The companies had stranded again and again. She was sick and despondent and had taken to stimulants.

I wired an order for some flowers for Mollie's funeral. "A broken column of the largest white roses" the order read. Then I went to the manager and told him that the doctor had ordered a rest.

"When?" He was surprised, for he had been asking me to call a physician.

"Five years ago, only I couldn't obey him then."

So I packed my things and went down to visit some old friends in Virginia. I lived outdoors in the wonderful sunshine and rode and drove over those splendid clay roads. I played with my friend's children and helped her entertain her visitors. I went to bed at nine and slept until seven. And in a little while I could laugh naturally again, and

the wine of life again flowed in my veins. and——

I came back to work? Not I. I married a neighbor of my friend's and lived a quiet, wholesome life on one of the dear, old, historic "places" on the James River, and I haven't a nerve left.

We go to New York once or twice a year. I drop in at the Professional Woman's League, just to be reminded of what I have escaped. They talk to me about "hits" and failures, principally failures. Once the secretary said: "O, Miss Standard! If you had only held on a little longer! Mr. Boreman didn't know you had left the stage. He sent for your address the other day. He wanted you for the lead in a New York piece, just the part to fit your personality. It will be a big success."

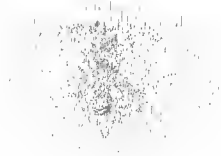
"Tell him I've made a big success."

A messenger arrived with a note for me. "From the gentleman waiting downstairs."

He explained, "I dare not venture into the sacred, manless precincts," it said, "but I

haven't seen my wife for an hour, and I'm jealous of those ambitious women. Shall we have a drive in the park?"

"I've made my big success," I repeated. "I've married the best man in the world, and that is the greatest of all 'hits.'"



The Passing of the Leading Lady

The Passing of the Leading Lady

IRST call!"

Margaret Graham was looking over the day's mail while her maid dressed and powdered her hair for "The Cliftons."

The "Twelfth Night" asked her to assist in receiving Harvey Manners, the English actor, who was to be its next solitary male guest of honor. The Professional Woman's League reminded her of "dues" overdue. One or two unknowns there were who sent her their written admirations. And there was a letter from home, the village up in the Maine woods. She thought she caught the fragrance of balsam as she opened it, and smiled whimsically as she began to read.

"The babies and I are thinking of you to-day," it said, "and are making a commonplace enough group as I write. Toddles is going to sleep on his rocking-horse, and I am keeping one wary eye on him. Minnie is sitting on my knee, waiting for me to finish, so that she may scrawl her name below mine. Writing is a new accomplishment of hers, so be sure to praise it when you write. We are very commonplace and very happy. And how is it with you, my Serene Lady? We read of your success after success and your tremendous popularity, and it adds to our happiness. We believe you are happy, for a woman must be happy, or at least at peace with herself, to be successful. But we want to know how it is with your soul, dear, the part of you that really weeps and laughs, the part that the public doesn't know anything about. I told Tom this morning that you were like a deep, deep lake, and that there were few who even guessed what depths there were beneath that calm surface. Dear Margaret, no one knows what there is in a woman until love

comes and lashes her into a storm that wrecks and ruins, or soothes her into an infinite rest."

"Fifteen minutes!" shouted the call-boy.

The dressing over, Margaret Graham, the leading woman of the Lyceum Stock Company, communed with her twin in the mirror.

"Phyllis's letter is a touchstone of memories," she said to the reflection. "It makes you remember days you had nearly forgotten. Days in the cotton mills, when you recited 'The Speech of Regulus' and 'Aux Italiens' to the girls at the noon hour, and forgot the lunch in your tin pail, until the gong sounded to go back to work. Days when you looked out over the river and tangled your threads hopelessly while you built your castles in Spain.

"I must be frank with you," she said. "I don't want to wound you, but you must admit there was no beauty to aid you. You deserve credit that you got on without it. The teacher of elocution gave you free lessons and you read at one of his 'evenings,' and the manager of an entertainment bureau was

there and offered you a 'route.' And a theatrical manager came to one of your 'readings,' and engaged you for his company. You then joined the stock company here, and you were made the leading woman, and this——"

She looked about the large dressing-room. Its walls were covered with the pictured faces of her player friends; faces and names that the world knew well and admired. The long, narrow dressing-table was covered with lace, through which pink silk peeped. Toilet-bottles of cut-glass and silver, a silver alcohol-lamp with silver curling-irons, a French opera-cloak thrown across the chair, and herself in a gown of pale blue silk and old lace.

The sparkle of diamonds at her throat and on her hands and in her hair.

"How different from the factory days!" she smiled.

She looked at the pink roses in a bowl and at a dark, predatory-looking face from a frame near the mirror.

It was one of her moments unaware. She

leaned forward quickly and touched the roses with her lips. Then she kissed the picture.

"Last call!"

Margaret Graham walked gracefully forward to her place at the centre of the stage. The maid heard the soft fall of the velvet curtains as they were drawn apart. She heard the soft patting of gloved hands in greeting to the favorite leading woman "discovered alone," awaiting the arrival of her lover.

"I'd rather be hur nor any lady in the wurld," remarked Annie, whose fingers were defter than her tongue.

"Right you are," said Joe, the property-man, and the loyal pair watched her as she waited for the applause to end.

She stood straight and tall, dignified, and steady-eyed, as her company and her admiring public had always seen her, and as befitted the leading woman and long-time favorite of the best theatre in the metropolis.

To the fashionables, who flocked there and regarded the Lyceum as their own, Margaret Graham was a familiar goddess. They

flocked to first-nights to see, not the stock company, but Miss Graham, in the new part. Over breakfast coffee and afternoon tea and evening champagne they compared it with the last and the "one before that," and the verdict was nearly always favorable and always loving.

The soft patting of gloved hands was heard again when the curtain fell upon the first act. Margaret Graham walked slowly to her dressing-room. With her was the man with the predatory-looking face, the original of the picture at the right of the mirror. A small, handsome man, with the keen, dark eyes and the ready smile of his race.

"Here's the pigmy comin' with her," said Annie, who had no reverence even for a manager.

"Tut! tut!" said slow-moving Joe, folding a cloud away in the wings. "Mr. Boreman's all right."

"No, he ain't. I never seen a man yet I just couldn't abide that was all right. He pizens the air I breathe, and she so fine and

high-like, an' just worships the toad. I hate little men, anyway. They're never just square."

Margaret Graham swept into the dressing-room, the small man following her. She stood in the middle of the room and looked down at him as he sat at the edge of the big, leather-covered divan.

"How do you like Miss Winston's understudy?" he asked.

"She does well enough. She's crude, of course. Will Miss Winston be back to-morrow?"

"Hardly! The doctor says she is going from one convulsion into another. He thinks she won't live through the night."

"Poor Jennie!" Those who thought the leading woman cold would have been surprised at the mist that rose to her eyes and at the sympathetic quiver of her firm lips.

"Will you keep her understudy in the part?"

"I think she will do when she is 'limbered' up. She is pretty, don't you think so?"

The leading woman looked straight ahead and did not answer.

The manager bit his cigar and smiled. "Don't you think so?" he repeated.

"In an evil way, yes. I think," she said, looking at him reflectively, "we are mistaken about the sex of the devil. The chief of evil spirits is a woman."

The manager laughed.

"Second act."

The soubrette tapped timidly at the door and drew back when she saw the manager.

"Come in," he said. "I was just going. By the way, Margaret, is Miss Raglan's coming apropos of what you just said?"

The leading woman bent and kissed the brown-eyed, rotund little woman in her fantastic makeup as "slavery."

"No," she said, smiling. "Mollie is my good angel."

As the manager disappeared, the leading woman drew about her shoulders the lace scarf that was to take the place of the opera-cloak in the second act.

"You and the comedian seem to enjoy playing opposite," she observed, tentatively.

Someone had remarked that Mollie's conversation reminded him of the bursting of a cork from an over-full bottle.

"Oh, yes," she bubbled, frankly, "he is the male creature that I am draping my fancies about at present. I've a vague recollection that I thought he had one eyelid that needed propping, and that his hair was distastefully red, and that he had a crooked little body when he joined the company. But that is all changed. He has a handsome, manly figure, and chestnut hair, and lovely eyes. What an artist I am at transformation!"

When Miss Graham and her maid stepped into the carriage that night they waited for a scarcely perceptible time.

During that moment the stage-door opened and a shrill, girlish laugh pierced the wintry night. Following the laugh came the new juvenile, and just beyond was Fred Boreman, the manager.

"Home!" called Miss Graham.

"There's Mr. Boreman, ma'am," said Annie, dismayed.

Miss Graham drew her furs about her and answered, calmly:

"He doesn't come with us this evening. He is detained."

Manager Boreman did not drive home with Miss Graham and her maid, for one of Annie's unequalled chafing-dish suppers, so often after that. He had to consult men on business at the club. Their drives in the park were rarer. And one evening he forgot to send the roses for the bowl under the leading woman's mirror. He came in after the first act and apologized for the omission, and she answered amiably, but Maggie noticed how often she dropped the "make-up things" because her hands trembled.

Sometimes when he had called, or when they had returned from their drives, the maid saw that look on her face she had seen when she played "Fedora," and "felt it so that she just couldn't get herself together after the third act," as Annie explained.

Those who gave Miss Graham more than the casual attention due an artist began to see the traces of some inward storm upon her face. It was paler. The lips were drawn into the unbecoming line of resolve. There were instants when her eyes looked frightened. Her voice was weaker, and there was a new note of half-appeal in it.

One afternoon they were rehearsing a scene in the "Fancy Ball." They were about to dance the minuet. The manager gave instructions to the assembled company. He showed each dancer what position to take. He lingered a shade longer when he spoke to the new juvenile. Her eyes and teeth flashed a laughing answer. The company looked curiously at the two. Then by a common impulse they looked at Miss Graham, who was near enough to hear. Her eyes wandered from the pair to the gray outlines of the sheeted orchestra. She toyed aimlessly with her chatelaine.

"Ready!"

They took their places. They saluted each

other with deep, court bows. They began the dainty, mincing steps of the period into which they had been translated by the play.

"Slower!" commanded Boreman.

The measure slackened. It was that figure in which each woman clasped the hands of the other women. Miss Graham and Miss Raglan clasped hands. The "funny woman" looked apprehensive.

"How cold your hands are! What is the matter, Margaret?" she whispered.

Miss Graham did not hear. Her fine head was high and well back. There was a small tempest in the laces at her bosom. Her pupils dilated.

The company stared. Was that "business" of the part?

Away back under the gallery, a man, a manager friend of Fred Boreman's, admitted to the rehearsal by courtesy, was lounging upon one of the sheeted chairs.

"A devilish fine figure she cuts at such moments," he confided to himself. "I wonder——"

The movement of the dance stopped. The players, sheep-like, looked at their leader. Miss Graham had stopped opposite the juvenile woman. They looked into each other's eyes. Swift, silent messages were telegraphed in that instant. The juvenile offered her hand. The leading woman hesitated. She turned slowly to Boreman, her back to the girl.

"I never saw such a look," Annie shiveringly confided to Tony. "It was like a call from the very bottom of a soul. That was the woman of it. But there was the look, too, of a child that was frightened at something it felt in the dark.

"Oh, Tony! it was awful, awful, and that brute Boreman never answered it, just pretended not to see and looked past her at that nasty little juvenile and smiled."

Margaret Graham knew, too, that that cry was not answered. She turned dumbly and tried to go on with the dance. Again the girl with the laughter in her eyes, and on her lips, held out her hand. The leading woman

stared at her with dull eyes. She stood irresolute, her breath coming quickly.

"Oh, God! I cannot; I will not!" she moaned.

"Come, Miss Margaret," pleaded Annie, in tearful tones, from the wings.

Miss Graham stared dully at the maid. She ran to her.

"Oh, Annie! I can't — I can't!" she gasped. The maid led her slowly to the dressing-room.

Manager Boreman tapped at the door uncertainly a moment later. There was no answer and he went away frowning.

"Rehearsal same hour to-morrow," he called over his shoulder.

Miss Graham was lifted into her carriage and driven to her home. The next morning the paper's headlines told the story of the actress's unaccountable nervous collapse and her retirement from the Lyceum. No visitors were admitted to her home.

Two weeks later she had so far recovered as to sign a contract for a starring tour with

the manager who had been lounging far back under the gallery at the rehearsal.

There were plays to read and choose. There was a company to make up. There was scenery to be ordered and inspected. And there were costumes.

"There is so much to do. New productions don't give one an appetite," she would say when her dinner was sent back untouched.

"Yes," she answered when she was reminded that she had walked her bedroom floor all night, "I am too busy to sleep."

It was at the time that the fringe of the theatres, those persons who are thrown into a deliciously palpitant state by a fleeting glimpse of players out of make-up hours, began to say:

"I saw Margaret Graham at Mme. Bovee's to-day. She isn't at all like she is on the stage. She is one of those women that are made by gaslight. Why, she has skin that is positively gray. Her mouth droops, and there are two deep lines between her eyes."

The cruel glitter of Broadway and the afternoon sunshine were traitors. They made James Ferguson, the comedian just returned from a year's tour, bar her hurried exit from a shop and made him say, "Been ill, Margaret?"

She colored. "No, I'm busy getting ready to star. That's hard work, you know, Jim."

Ferguson made a rapid calculation as she left him. "Not more than twenty-nine, hardly that. Jove, how she's gone off! What is it?"

The company opened at Elizabeth, N. J. From thence it went to Connecticut. The criticisms were polite. They gave three non-committal lines to the new production and thirty to Miss Graham's "previous career."

The company continued throughout New England.

"We must cancel Boston," the manager said one night.

The star lifted questioning eyes to his.

"We are not quite ready for it," he said, uneasily. She was really a "devilish fine

woman," and he couldn't be brutal, just yet. "We'll have to have the second act rewritten. And that comedian won't do; he's about as funny as an undertaker. I'm going to give him two weeks' notice. We've got to liven the piece, or——. We'll start West Thursday."

"I am glad," she said. "I like the Western people, and they used to like me."

In the first Western city of importance the critics, who were ever fond of Miss Graham, described the production as a "personal triumph of Miss Graham's." They scored the play and the company and the manager. This was repeated in several cities, where the star was the centre of pleasant theatrical memories. At last they "played" a town where all were equally unknown. The "notices" were heartbreaking.

"There are too many claimants to starship, and they should be put down," said one. "Miss Graham is not a star. If she were not so announced, she might easily be taken for a rushlight. We are obliged to the manager

for informing us that she is a star. She walked through the part as though she were not of this earth, but had her mind on things above, even in heaven. We are told that Miss Graham has had better days. We offer the lady our condolences that they are over."

Soon afterward they played in a capital city, where a large audience of Graham admirers greeted them. It was a serious—it might be said to be sad—audience. There were one or two perfunctory curtain calls in contrast with the storm of first applause at the star's entrance. The criticisms were again "polite."

The second night was one of half-filled seats.

A stout, homely little woman, who "had loved Margaret Graham from the first time she saw her," snubbed the stage-doorkeeper and ordered him to "take that card back or there'll be trouble."

Miss Graham received her in her dressing-room. "Why, Margaret!" said the fussy little woman, taking her in her arms. "What's

the matter, dear? You are not yourself; you are some other woman."

The star rested her forehead upon the low, broad shoulder. "Do you see it, too, Janet?" she sobbed. "I am a failure. I knew it. A woman must be happy to be successful."

She offered her visitor a chair and sat opposite her. But she looked beyond her and past her even while she talked of the weather, of their friends, of anything and everything but the performance and herself.

The little woman's prune-like face grew more weazened. She looked searchingly at the drawn mouth and the wavering eyes. She knew that Margaret Graham was not a woman to question. Instead she leaned forward and patted the star's bediamonded hand with her stubby one.

"Listen, dear," she said; "I don't want to know what has made you so nervous. It's enough for me that you are in trouble. Now, I'm a lot older than you, and I've learned some things that are hard to learn. One is

that there's no failure so great as that success can't follow it. And another is,"—and she spoke very slowly, for emphasis—"that we must never let any man spoil our life."

There was no answer.

"There's a time that comes to all of us—I've never known a woman who has escaped it—when she has to face about and readjust her ideas, and make everything over new. Were you ever poor enough to have to turn your dresses, Margaret? That's what we have to do with our lives when they get faded or worn or shiny. If they're 'good goods,' as the dressmakers say, we can make them look as good as new, and nobody but ourselves knows the difference; and after a while we can make ourselves forget it. And there's another thing we must never lose sight of, for our welfare's sake—we must not think that since there was someone whose deformities we didn't see at first, because we didn't look at him with clear eyes, that there are none but deformed men and women; that is fatal, child.

We can survive one mistake, but we can't live in a world full of mistakes."

Miss Graham's hand shook under the detaining one on her knee.

"Third Act!" sang the call-boy.

The star looked at the door with terror in her eyes. "Oh, Janet!" she cried, "how can I face those dreadful empty benches?" She summoned her strength by a great effort. "Good-by, Janet," she said, almost stiffly. "You are very good."

Soon the newspapers ceased to be polite. The manager took their cue. It was announced that Miss Graham's season had been shortened because of her illness.

She returned to New York and the house on Nineteenth Street, near the park. The neighbors noticed that she climbed the steps falteringly, as an old woman. Then the doors swung fast against most of Margaret Graham's old world.

Mollie Raglan, now Mollie Evans, penetrated once. It was after she met Jim Ferguson, who said: "Go up to see Margaret.

They may tell you she's out, or ill, but insist upon seeing her. There's something wrong up there," and the comedian shook a melancholy head. "It's too deep for me; but you go and find out. You would nose out the secret of the Sphinx."

Mollie tossed her head saucily and boarded a car. But when Ferguson's round, red face was lost to sight her own grew grave, and she sighed.

Annie met her at the door and led her into the little reception-room, so like and yet so changed.

She had lost her "heart" for work, she said, and the "down-stairs" had degenerated. The small white and gold reception-room had lost its brilliancy. The personal aroma of the mistress was gone. The hangings and carpet were faded. Dust covered the few books on the table and the empty silver card-receiver.

"Better go right up and surprise her," Annie suggested, nervously.

Vital Mollie Evans shivered slightly and

tears gathered in her round eyes. They fell in showers when Miss Graham looked up indifferently as she entered.

Margaret Graham sat in her bedroom, doing what she always did now—nothing. Devoted Annie kept this room as cheerful as possible, but her efforts were regarded with a faint "Thank you," or a blank stare.

The room looked bare. She had ordered every chair taken out of the room, except the low rocking-chair in which she sat and rocked incessantly. Two deep-worn ruts, making pale lines in the vivid blue of the carpet, marked her path of travel diagonally across the room. The lace curtains were gone and only stout shades remained at the windows. But one bit of furniture remained—the bed in the corner, a narrow iron one that suggested a cell.

The wall-paper was rent in ragged lines, as though violent fingers had torn their way through it in impotent fury.

"How do you do, Mollie?" said the actress,

slowly, while she kept on rocking. "Why are you crying?"

"I am so glad to see you again, dear," faltered the visitor. "Are you well?"

"Yes, thank you," with an effort. "Are you?"

"I'm married, you know. I decided to marry Tony Evans. The creature would never take care of himself. He was always catching a cold, and I was afraid he might have pneumonia, and he annoyed me, so I married him."

Miss Graham's wandering attention was fixed. "I'm glad, Mollie. That is what every woman should do; marry a good man, who truly loves her."

Mollie's bubbling words failed her. The pathos of the figure opposite silenced her. Margaret Graham, in a gray house-gown that restless hands had tried to strip of its chiffon until it hung in ribbons; Margaret Graham, with blowsy hair and long, ragged nails. Was this the shining, well-groomed favorite of the Lyceum of two years before? Des-

peration goaded her words that would arrest those wandering eyes.

"Fred Boreman's mother is dead."

Silence.

"He can marry now. You know it was her prejudice that kept him single before."

Mollie was desperate. Could she bring no light of interest into those heavy, unseeing eyes?

"That silly little Milliken will never get him in the world. He never was really interested in her. He only thought he was, for a week or two."

The dull face opposite Mollie's did not change.

"How did you like starring, Margaret?"

"It was a failure."

"But——"

"Do you remember algebra, Mollie?"

"A little."

"There were three methods of elimination. One was by cancellation, and one was by addition and subtraction, and one was by substitution. I tried to eliminate something by

substitution, but I failed. My starring venture was the substitution, and it didn't eliminate."

She laughed monotonously and plucked at the torn chiffon. Then she began rocking fiercely, determinedly urging the chair forward in its pale, worn path to the door.

"Good-by," said Mollie, chokingly, kissing the brown hair, in which the gray was beginning to appear. Miss Graham did not answer. She had forgotten her visitor. She went on rocking.

"Oh, Annie! Annie! how dreadful!" the comedienne said when the maid met her in the hall.

"Yes, ma'am, 'tis," said the maid, stolidly.

"And all for that worthless wretch of a——"

"Don't; she wouldn't want anyone to speak of it! Men is what women thinks them —to the women, and she never could get used to thinking different, and she could never go back to thinking what she did before that day when she couldn't make herself take that

woman's hand in the minuet." Annie, too, had grown vague in that house of dreams.

Mollie burst into the Evans apartment, as the mildly wondering Tony put it, "like a young tornado."

"What's up, Mollie?" he asked.

He at once became the centre of a whirlwind that beat him vigorously with small, gloved fists, and, when it was tired, subsided in the cosey corner, sobbing tumultuously.

"Was the costumer horrid?"

"I didn't see the old thing."

"Has Mandeville cut our salaries because we insist on working double?"

"I haven't seen him, either."

"Then please, Mollie, tell me what gave you this turn."

Mollie turned eyes, so swollen that the lids half hid their disdain, upon him.

"I hate you, Tony Evans, because you're a man! I hate your whole tribe!"

Tony apologized so meekly that she forgave him, because, as he humbly stated, he "couldn't help it," and as she admitted he "really was the best one she knew."

Mollie and Tony called the next week to take Miss Graham driving. They were told she was too ill to go. When they called again they were refused admittance by a stranger who " was simply obeying orders."

The next time they found Annie packing trunks for a journey.

" She never would see nobody, and she just sat up there an' thought, an' thought, drivin' in a circle, an' always comin' back to the place she started from, an' now it's come," she explained.

Mollie gripped Tony's sleeve.

" It's hopeless, the doctors say," Annie went on, " so they've took her off."

" To—a—sanitarium? "

" To an asylum. But don't cry, Miss Evans. She's better now. 'Twas the nights when she'd walk and walk and scream, low-like under her breath, that was awful. There's no more o' the restlessness an' ravin' an' cryin'. She smiles all the time an' talks soft an' plays like a baby."

The Great Peace was upon her.

Her One Superstition

Her One Superstition

EVERYONE marvelled at the uniform cheerfulness of Miss Eleanor Lawton, soubrette.

She was a big girl, too radiant and wholesome to be called merely pretty, and yet lacking much of simple beauty of feature or coloring. Big hazel eyes that reflected her every thought, and even, flashing, white teeth that revealed themselves in her every smile or laugh were what people remembered best. These and a fine, echoing, contralto laugh made her unique, and, as expressing her innermost personality, beloved. The propertymen liked her, and she was the only one in the company whom the wardrobe women did not, from class prejudice and traditional principle, fervently hate.

She had only one element of unpopularity. She awakened distrust.

The company looked upon her very much in the light that the respectable inhabitants of the venerable City of Salem regarded the occult ladies whom they burned and hanged. Miss Lawton did not respect the traditions of the profession.

She did not care a particle how she saw the moon. She often whistled softly in her dressing-room.

She walked under a ladder when the crew was hoisting scenes. She belonged to an "Up with Thirteen" Club.

She told often with unction that she had broken a mirror on the night of her début, seven years ago, and had had an increase of salary every year since.

No one had ever seen her carry an amulet, not even a little lead St. Joseph, or St. Anthony of Padua, nor wear a yellow garter.

She had even made the third of a trio passing on the stairs, which everyone properly

brought up professionally knows is a deadly omen.

And she had had the unparallelled effrontery to be born on Friday, and the bad taste to exult in the fact.

So everyone in Harry Perley's "Rose of the Wilderness" Company avoided her as much as he or she consistently could. It was not easy, for she was royally good-natured and seemed never to have the headaches, nor bad tempers, nor "spells" of the other women. But there was something queer about her; anyone could see that. Hadn't she signed the contract for this engagement on Friday? That was enough.

She lived rather apart from the others, because she wanted to avoid the headaches and bad tempers and "spells." She seldom joined the company at late suppers, and if she did she left them before the second toast had mixed with their blood and transformed it to a temporary ichor. She did not often indulge in chatter on the trains, for she said she had a great deal of reading to do. Jim

Hamilton, the comedian, who was handsome and brutal, and boasted that he was a bad study, because he always depended upon his luck to "carry him through," made the discovery that what she read were old plays and the biographies of the greatest players and managers. She read all she could get, too, on stage technique. Having made this discovery, handsome Jim Hamilton sniffed.

"As though she would ever be a great actress with that unfinished, Irish face," he had said, which hearing, a flame shot out into her cheeks and something hot and burning blurred the dance of the telegraph-poles.

Yet, when Jim Hamilton's wife, the pretty little ingenue, fell ill, and it was screamed about at rehearsal that it might be smallpox, she sent her maid to ask Miss Lawton to come to her room; and the soubrette, carrying her head high, so that the generous breadth of her nostrils could be seen, suggesting a leonine something about her, went at once.

"I feel so afraid here by myself, with even Jim gone to rehearsal," Mrs. Jim sighed, flut-

teringly. "I thought most of your work was in the first act and you could be spared. Wasn't it queer that I sent for you when I never really liked you, and you knew it? But I wasn't sure of any of the other girls and I thought you'd come."

The company was quite prepared for Miss Lawton's note to the manager, saying that a rash had broken out on Mrs. Hamilton's face, and that she thought it best not to return to the company for the present. "I will remain with her until we know what this is—and after—if she needs me," she wrote to the manager. The company left that night, Jim Hamilton and Eleanor Lawton remaining behind in the little Southern hotel with the sick woman.

That the rash proved in two days to be mere varioloid, and that in another week the three rejoined the company, was only another proof that Eleanor Lawton was "queer." "It was foolhardy," they said, "to run such a risk for the company. It might have been smallpox, and she might have rejoined them

and infected the whole company." And they glared at her, proving that some players are as illogical as some women.

Jim Hamilton and his pretty wife demurred mentally against this judgment, but they deemed it wise, for the sake of their own popularity, not to hear, and so not to have to meet these charges.

One evening the tall, red-cheeked girl sent a shock in direct line through the dressing-rooms, first through the women's side and then communicating itself quickly to the men's. She had a new fall hat, an ordinary enough little affair of felt and velvet, but its trimming was—imagine such a thing!—peacock-feathers!

"This is too much!" said the leading woman, stamping her foot. "I shall speak to the manager. She will hoodoo the company."

"It's pure devilishness! That's what I say," said the character-woman.

There was a conference between the acts, at which everyone had something to say except

Jim Hamilton and his wife. They looked stealthily at each other and were silent. If Miss Lawton would do such a foolish thing, what could they do? Though everyone was outspoken in his disapproval, no one seemed willing to communicate the sense of the meeting to the soubrette. They were not afraid of her. Certainly not! they were merely afraid that they would lose their tempers. Wouldn't Mrs. Corwin, the "old woman," go? It had been observed that Mrs. Corwin was the only one at whom the soubrette had not laughed, at some time or other. Accordingly she consented to be the Mercury of the committee.

She tapped at Miss Lawton's dressing-room door just as the girl with the glowing cheeks was putting on the trouble-provoking hat.

"Won't you come up to my room this evening, and we'll have a little lunch by ourselves?" asked the "old woman."

The girl's eyes brightened at the unusual invitation.

"Ever so many thanks, dear Mrs. Corwin," she returned. "Of course I will!"

It was striking one as they took off their wraps in Mrs. Corwin's very hotel-like room, a narrow, grave-like one, with its grayish plaster walls carrying out the illusion.

They ate their muffins and cheese and drank their milk from the top of the high bureau, and it was between bites that Mrs. Corwin approached her message.

"You have a new hat, I see."

"Yes; I bought it at Remson's to-day. It was a bargain. Like it?"

"Yes, it is becoming, but——"

"What?"

"Why do you wear those peacock-feathers?"

"My mother gave them to me long ago. They were hers, and she said they would trim a hat prettily. They do, don't you think?"

"Yes, but——"

"What do you want to say, Mrs. Corwin?"

"The fact is, the company don't like them. They think they will bring us hard luck."

"How silly! You don't think so, Mrs. Corwin?"

"No, I don't," she faltered, "but—you—make yourself unpopular by going against established custom anywhere"—and she laughed apologetically.

"If they don't know any better, I shall teach them, the foolish creatures!" The girl's head went high. "How ridiculous! I wondered what ailed them to-night. They never liked me, but they were worse than usual all evening. I shall wear this hat until the manager of the company forbids it. You may tell them so."

"Very well, my dear," said the "old woman," a trifle sullenly, brushing the crumbs into a newspaper with her hand.

The soubrette flung her strong, young arms around her and rested her cheek upon the old woman's gray hair.

"Dear Mrs. Corwin," she said, with a little tremble in her voice, "I would do this to

please you if you cared, but you know you don't; and those foolish people should be taught that I am not a child, nor they children. But, Mrs. Corwin, I feel so keenly that they don't like me. I'm so lonely! I wish I could make you love me just a little. Perhaps I would miss mother less then." The tremor in her voice had become a sob.

Mrs. Corwin raised the girl's head and looked at her. Her eyes, softened as they were now in their wistfulness, reminded her of a little girl whose grave she visited every time she went to San Francisco. She kissed Eleanor Lawton's forehead.

"Very well, my dear," she said again, not sullenly now, but with the solemnity of a compact.

The next day at the matinée Miss Lawton told George Gregor, manager of the "Rose of the Wilderness," that the company had formally served notice on her that she should not wear peacock-feathers.

"Tush!" growled Gregor; and thus the incident closed.

When Miss Errington demanded more pay for an "extra performance," and, upon the management's refusal, stayed behind when the company left for Portland, there was consternation.

Mr. Gregor flitted from the drawing-room to the smoking-room and back again like an uneasy spirit.

"Old man's scared; and no wonder," commented the leading man. He'll have to close." And he puffed his cigar, placidly planning how he should enjoy himself in Portland when the company was "laid off."

In one of his restless trips through the train Manager Gregor happened to glance at Miss Lawton. She was deep in the "Life of Mrs. Siddons." He looked at her again. Finally he took a seat by her side. The company saw her look up brightly, and heard her say, "I should like to try."

They heard him speak of "a private rehearsal at seven," and saw him draw the leading woman's "part," typewritten and tat-

tered from three months' usage, from his pocket and give it to the soubrette, who, forgetting his presence, at once buried herself in it.

"He is going to try her in Miss Errington's part," Jim Hamilton said, and this time forgot to sniff.

"The Rose of the Wilderness" Company opened, as usual, that night. Mrs. Gregor, who had retired from the stage when she was married, played the soubrette rôle and Miss Lawton played the lead, the title rôle.

The audience gave her a "reception" before it realized that she was not their favorite, Miss Errington. Then, having committed itself, remained warm. When she rode out of the fort in the very teeth of a storm of arrows to get succor for the garrison, it shouted "Bravo" at her. At the close of the third act she received all the flowers that had been brought for Miss Errington. After the last act she was called before the curtain.

Mr. and Mrs. Gregor met her at the door of her dressing-room. "Thank you," said

the manager, a man of few words and brief, grasping her hand.

Mrs. Corwin found her shedding a few happy tears and trembling a little from the reaction when she went to congratulate her in her dressing-room.

"Weren't you frightened?" she asked.

"You may find it hard to believe, dear Mrs. Corwin," she said, "but I wasn't a bit."

"You strange child! I never heard of such a thing!"

"But it's true!"

"You've smashed another stage tradition. Why?"

"I'll tell you some time. There is something else I want to tell you." And she fastened a pin in the hat trimmed with peacock-feathers.

Miss Errington's resignation was accepted and Miss Lawton was engaged in her place for the rest of the season. She played the "lead" to the pleasure of her audiences, the satisfaction of her manager, and the deep concern of the critics.

It was a week later, before the season closed, when the rising of the first-act curtains followed close upon sunset and preceded the lighting of the street-lamps by several minutes. The leading woman was very pale when she came in at the stage entrance, carrying a newspaper.

"Please call a messenger," she said to the doorkeeper, and hurried to her dressing-room, holding the "extra" as in a vise.

Through the door that admitted the messenger came the shrieks of the newsboys. "All — about — horrible accident! Special train carrying Knight-Howland Company wrecked. All killed!"

Miss Lawton sat staring at the great, black headlines of the newspapers. Her ruddy, young face had grown old in the gaslight. She wrote three words on a telegraph-blank and handed it to a messenger. Then she forced herself to "make up."

The play went as usual. "The Rose of the Wilderness" seemingly played with her usual spirit. When the final curtain had

gone down a messenger-boy met her with a telegram.

"Safe. Missed company's train. Followed on regular. Love.

"Frank Crichton."

That night the leading lady and the "old woman" had their customary frugal midnight luncheon in Mrs. Corwin's room.

Miss Lawton handed the telegram to her friend. "It's from the man I am going to marry next week," she said, looking at her with bright, dry, grave eyes. "He is with the Knight-Howland Company that was wrecked on the C. & R. to-day."

"Rec'd 11.15," the "old woman" read. "And you were in suspense for four hours after you saw the extra? Poor little one, how frightened you must have been!"

"A little," she admitted, as she leaned her tired, brown head on her slim hand. "It was a shock, of course! and I feel strange and trembly now that it's over. But I felt almost

sure it would turn out so, and I'm going to tell you why."

She fumbled with a thin gold chain around her neck.

"I know you have wondered why I cared nothing about signs and omens, and why I have never shown nervousness or fear, even when I had to play Miss Errington's part at two hours' notice. This is the reason."

She opened her locket and Mrs. Corwin saw two bright girl faces smiling in serene confidence at life.

"They were my dearest friends," she said. "We played together before we could walk. We grew up together. We cared so much for each other that we never had a real quarrel, and when one sickened of a fever the others fell sick too. They were taken and I was left. And I have never really been afraid since, for"—she lifted her earnest eyes to the other's face with infinite certainty—"I have always known that they are taking care of me."

When Mrs. Corwin told this story to the

company it took up a subscription for a wedding present for their late leading lady. "Jim" Hamilton sniffed that it wasn't the right thing at all. It was an amulet of gold filigree, in the form of an anchor.

Grimston's School of Acting

Grimston's School of Acting

JOE Grimston was "hard up." It is not essential that we know why. His money may have departed by way of "jolly games of poker, just among friends, you know," or it may have gone the way of loans to brothers and sisters of the boards "out of an engagement."

It was gone. That was quite enough for Joe's practical non-retrospective mind.

"What to do? That's all I care about at this talking," he said.

"Bings," the juvenile, top floor, rear room, was in precisely the same condition. So was Howard Loeser, "villain," third floor, side. Ditto Minnie Long, second floor back, who was only twenty-three, but couldn't play

anything but "character," because she was so ugly. Worst of all, good Mrs. Wilkins, who kept this particular theatrical house, was being "pushed." Altercations with the butcher and grocer-boys, precipitated by the bills they presented daily, were giving her chronic red eyes and a drooping expression. The atmosphere of the house was so depressing that it came near affecting Joe's irrepressible spirits. This was chiefly, though, because he was sorry for "Mother Wilkins."

"What's the matter, Joe?" asked Billy Arnold, who had stopped at Newark on his way to play a summer stock engagement at Peek's Island, and found the comedian standing in the middle of the room above the kitchen, his feet far apart, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, and he whistling gloomily to an audience, that, judging from his upturned face, must have been located in the ceiling.

"Had a compound fracture of my finances," returned Joe, cheerily.

"Why don't you borrow from the fellows?"

"They're broke as bad as I am."

"I can let you have a tenner, Joe, if you'll let me have it in two weeks. I'll have to send for my wife and babies as soon as I get settled at the Island."

"No use, old man, thank you. I'll probably be as bad off in two weeks as now, unless I can think of something. I was just thinking it out when you came in. You interrupted me."

"Thanks; I'll go."

"You're welcome! So long."

After Arnold had gone, Joe continued to stare at the ceiling. After reflection he brought his feet together suddenly, his eyes beamed, and he snapped his fingers, expressing profound satisfaction. He addressed the bureau with a cracked mirror.

"I'll open a school of acting," he said.

The mirror looked as though it approved.

The next morning there appeared conspic-

uously on the advertising page of all the local papers this leaded announcement:

"Joe Grimston's School of Acting will open next week. All branches taught. Number of pupils limited. Applications must be made at once, in person. Terms strictly cash in advance."

The evening before Grimston had held a long conference with his fellows of "fractured finances."

"You can all come in on this," he said. "Bings, you must clear out during business hours so that we can open the folding-doors and use the whole floor for the school. Loeser, you must cultivate the habit of early rising, for we'll want to use your place for a reception-room. Minnie, get together what make-up things you have. If you are out of powder and rouge, Mrs. Wilkins will lend you some starch and beet-juice. And Mrs. Wilkins, I'll trouble you for one thing only, the desk that palmist fellow left when he

skipped his bill. It looks business-like. We may have it? Thank you! It will be all we can do to be out and dressed when the rush begins to-morrow."

He was right. Ting-a-ling! The door-bell spoke with an accent of trepidation. Mrs. Wilkins's face brightened. She dusted the flour from her bony old hands. The ring of her tormentors, the butcher and the grocer-boy, had a different accent.

A slender, blond young man removed his hat with unction. She remembered him well. He was the cashier of the Second National Bank. There was an entirely new deference in his manner.

"I would like to see Mr. Grimston, the head of the 'School of Acting,'" he observed.

"Certainly! Certainly!" said Mrs. Wilkins, in a delighted flurry. "O, I wonder if Mr. Loeser is up," she whispered, in dreadful trepidation.

The "villain" was not up. Through the keyhole filtered a soft snore. He was dream-

ing confidently of the quick profits of the "School of Acting."

The landlady led the cashier to the top floor with more confidence.

"Come in," said Mr. Grimston, in deep abdominal tones.

He sat before the big desk, writing busily. It was several minutes before he looked up.

"Ah, good-morning!" he said, brusquely.

"Good-morning," said the cashier, suavely. Yes, Mr. Grimston looked even younger than on the stage in Barney's Stock. His red hair and his freckles remained to identify him.

But where were his fun and his grimaces? This young man was a serious, care-worn person. The cashier said something of the sort, falteringly, to the actor.

"Comedians are never funny, except on the stage," Grimston answered. "It is their business to be funny. Do you find anything very funny about counting cash, now?"

Grimston opened his watch and snapped it

shut quickly. "We must get to business at once," he said, mendaciously. "I expect my other pupils soon."

"What do you teach, the natural method or——"

"You have seen me act at Barney's?"

"Yes, I have often had the pleasure."

"Well, then, you know my method."

"What are your terms?"

"Fifty dollars a quarter. Terms strictly cash in advance."

"That is satisfactory." The cashier took out a yellowish green bill that was beautiful to Joe's famished eyes. The comedian hastily wrote a receipt.

"Let me see you walk across the floor. That is the first step in acting."

The young man from the Second National walked from the window of the front room to the window of the back, which Bings had willingly vacated, slipperless, in a dark brown bath-robe. Then he walked back again to the front window.

Grimston groaned.

"Try it again," he said, with an evident attempt to be patient.

The cashier again made the tour of the rooms.

Again Grimston groaned.

"Can't you walk like this?" he demanded. He sauntered across the room and rested an elbow on the roller-top desk.

"Try that," he said, without concealing his pride.

The cashier looked at him admiringly. "You remind me of Kelcey leaning against a mantle," he observed. "I have eighteen pictures of Kelcey leaning against mantles, all different mantles, too," with enthusiasm.

"I may have some mannerisms that are like Kelcey's, but we are of an entirely different class," said the head of the "School of Acting," loftily. "I could teach Herbert a good many things," he added, mysteriously.

The cashier gazed in rapt admiration at his instructor. It was plain that he was profoundly impressed. An hour later he walked into the bank with a disdainful expression.

Visions of a "first night" in New York, of boxes from which lovely women leaned in an abandon of emotion to throw roses at him and follow his every gesture with love-lit eyes, of applause like intermittent thunder, of a rain-fall of white and tinted notes, each with its crest and monogram and its rare perfume, in his dressing-room, made the high stools and the brass-barred windows of the Newark National a mean and hateful sight.

Grimston and the banished Loeser restored to his room were just then laughing undramatically.

"He wanted to know how long it would take him to play Billy Faversham parts. I told him three months of our school ought to give him an even chance with Billy, but that the Englishman would be handicapped, because he hadn't temperament."

Loeser grinned. "I suppose he asked you to get him a job?"

"O, yes!"

"What did you do?"

"I promised."

Then they went forth to "break the bill," Mrs. Wilkins and Mollie peering anxiously from the upper windows after them.

The next pupil was a tall, tailor-made young woman, dignified, but nervous. She kept her veil down and talked stiffly. Grimston recognized her at once as old Remington the dry-goods merchant's stage-struck daughter. But his face was unmoved when she introduced herself as Miss Allen, of New York.

"I do not need any instruction," she said, "for I have distinguished myself in parlor theatricals, and I do not need any introduction to managers, for my social position is such that my name will gain me *entrée* anywhere. I simply desire you to assist me in deciding upon a stage name. I shall probably have to confer with you often, for I am fastidious."

"Very well, madame," said Grimston, in his choicest abdominal tones, to convey the illusion of a dignity as great as his caller's. He waved her to a chair with the same flour-

ish he once used when he was miscast for the lead in the "County Judge."

"You are prepared to meet the conditions of my advertisement?" he continued.

"O, yes," and another yellowish-green bill was transferred from her silver reticule to his welcoming hand.

"Whoopee! Hooray!" The cry of elation, muffled slightly, came by way of the key-hole. Grimston walked to the window.

"The noise from the streets is penetrating," he said, gravely. "The street gamins are obtrusive. Go away!" he roared, and the window dropped with a warning bang. Thereafter there was silence in the hall.

Miss Remington, with all the preoccupation of the self-centred, was saying: "My fancy inclines more to Francesca Paola than anything else, but I am not sure that I am quite satisfied with that. Do you think it fits me?"

"Not just like a glove," admitted Grimston. "Why don't you use 'Remington'?"

"What—do—you—mean?" faltered the visitor.

"Mean? It is a good old-fashioned English name. It flows on smoothly. If I were a rhetorician I should say it is euphonious."

"I—don't—like—it," snapped the young woman.

"Why not?"

"Because—it is so common."

"Perhaps it is. Permit me, madame, to congratulate you on a step in the evolution of woman. You have given a reason. Stand up! Let me see you cross the room. I want to get an idea of your personality, so that I may find a name to fit it. Raise your veil!"

That was exactly what Miss Remington had intended not to do, but for some reason she could not explain she did.

"Good!" said the comedian. "I have it. 'Abigail Ruggles!'"

"You must be joking, sir!" said the girl, her back stiffening.

"Indeed, I am not. It is a strong name, one that people will not forget. You have

a strong individuality. What would you do with 'Leonie D'Arville,' for instance? 'Leonie' would live and die where she belonged, in the Casino chorus. No, Miss Allen, you are adapted to tragedy. That is what you want to play, now, isn't it? I was sure of it. You need a mountainous and picturesque name, something rugged and grand, like Sarah Bernhardt, only more so."

"Thank you! I'll—think—about it," reflected the pupil, her lips silently shaping themselves to "Abigail Ruggles." "But I should like to confer with you again."

"Certainly! Tuesdays and Fridays, at two. Bring a directory of Greater New York with you. I am sorry there is no one to call a carriage for you. I sent my 'Buttons' on an errand. You won't wait for him? I am sorry. Good-morning!"

Upon the stairs Miss Remington passed Mrs. Nelson. They glared at each other in the amiable way of cats and some women. Mrs. Nelson wore no veil, attempted no disguise.

"I can't say you have very promising material for pupils if Tillie Remington is a specimen. She's as graceful as a poker, just. And my mahogany dining-table has more temperament than she has. Now tell me just what temperament is. People talk a lot about it, but nobody seems to know anything. My husband says I have plenty, and to spare. But he says it's temper. It isn't just that, is it? Richard is a brute. I told him this morning I was going to leave him and go on the stage. He laughed and handed me this bill. He said, 'Go to see Joe Grimston, or buy a bonnet!' I suppose he thought I would never get past the milliner's. But I did, for I shut my eyes tight when we got to Mme. Merle's corner, and told Tom I was late, and to drive fast. Well, here's the money! Now let's begin right away."

The comedian knew that Mrs. Nelson was so unused to hearing her questions answered that she no longer expected anything so unusual. So he attempted nothing unique.

"Very well!" he said, thrusting the bill

deep into his pocket. He folded his arms and studied her critically.

"Walk from the fireplace to the desk," he commanded. "Now back again!"

"H'm! H'm!" he said, after she had fluttered back and forth in the erratic, wavering course of a human humming-bird.

"Walk more like this."

"I—can't," Mrs. Nelson answered, in a distressed tone, as she watched his stage stride.

"My—l—feet—are not long enough."

"That's true!" reflected Grimston. "Mary," he said, raising his voice a key, "call Mr. Loeser."

There was a space of time in which "Mary" did not appear—there being no "Mary"—but Mr. Loeser was presented.

"Now, Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Loeser is a villain." Mrs. Nelson grew a shade paler. "That is, a stage 'villain.' As to him personally, there are two opinions. One is his own, that he is not a villain. The other is that of everyone who knows him. But that is

an aside. Now, Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Loeser will try to kiss you."

"Indeed he will not!" said the small woman, indignantly.

"I mean he will pretend that he tries to kiss you, but you will cry, 'Stand back, sir!'"

"O!" in mollified tones.

"Now, Loeser!"

Although Loeser's mustache did not touch her cheek by a respectful two inches, she carefully dusted the profaned spot with her fluff of a lace handkerchief. "Wouldn't Tom just be sorry if he saw that?" she said silently, but with emphasis.

"Stand back!" she piped.

"Gesture!" reminded Grimston.

"Stand back!" she shrilled again, glaring at good-natured-looking Loeser and moving a nervous little arm in his direction.

"Gesture from the chest, not from the waist. Gesture away from, instead of toward you. If you gesture from the waist you break the line and cut yourself off at the mid-

dle to the audience. You have none too much height, anyhow."

"I didn't come here to be reminded of that," Mrs. Nelson sniffed.

"I am merely speaking professionally. There are but two classes of people in the world, professionals and non-professionals."

"Geese and swans," commented Mrs. Nelson, scornfully. But the small woman soon forgot such a ripple in the sea of amenities.

"There is only one thing that worries me about going on the stage. I must only play parts that will keep my face or back to the audience. I won't show my profile; it's bad."

So it was, what there was of it. Her nose was pettishly tilted, and it was a matter of conjecture whether there was really any bridge.

"I'm afraid that can't be done. But you might wear a false nose."

"How perfectly horrid! I don't know that I would like to go on the stage after all. It's so artificial! I think I'll go

home and speak to my husband about that nose."

That afternoon Fred Nelson, the leading civil lawyer of the State, walked chuckling into the "School of Acting."

"That's right, Grimston!" he roared. "You're a clever chap! Keep her at it and discourage her by encouraging her. She's in bed now with a sick headache. Good girl, but a little obstinate. Don't tell her about the hardships, except inferentially. Here's the tuition for next quarter, cash in advance. Good-by! Ho! Ho!"

That evening there was joyous council at the house.

"Eight pupils! $400 spot cash! And more pupils and more cash coming. Things are looking up, Mrs. Wilkins. How much do you owe her, Loeser? You, Bings? And Mollie! $200. There you are!" and he hugged the landlady boisterously, an embrace she did not resent.

"But, Loeser, what a bluff! Great thing, the old American game of bluff! It's well

there's no carpet; it would have been worn out, I made them walk so much. And I'd keep yelling at 'em, 'Gesture! gesture!' and no matter which hand they would use, I'd say, 'No, the other!'"

The "School of Acting" grew to twelve pupils, "strictly cash in advance." They walked and gestured, and growled or piped out Shakespeare's line in such a manner that their author wouldn't have known them, and the quarter closed with "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by the school. There was no stage scenery, and there were no "props.," but Miss Remington played "Topsy," and Mrs. Nelson "Little Eva," in a manner that made a deep impression. The cashier of the Second National was a swagger and terrible "Simon Legree."

That was the first and last appearance of the pupils upon any stage.

A Triumph of Temperament

A Triumph of Temperament

TWO men, who were sauntering up Broadway, walked more slowly as they passed a theatre, where electric lights above the door spelled the announcement that the most popular American actress was "starring" within. Double lines of carriages formed a parallel of liveried luxury for three blocks. A huge negro in yellow and blue, with buttons that glistened, held his megaphone in readiness to blare forth the numbers of the waiting carriages. There was a rustle within; the doors opened, and women in trailing silks, their jewel-flashing hair half revealed by their falling opera-hoods, swept out to the streets, followed by their escorts of expansive white fronts and sober, black sides and backs, the prescribed accoutrements of the men who

patronized the Empire. The air was filled with the hoarse calls of the haughty negro with the megaphone. Vague, delicious perfumes floated from velvet and lace as the women passed to their carriages. Snatches of "Wasn't it charming?" "Isn't she more delightful than ever?" reached them in swift-voiced approval, echoed by enthusiastic bassos. It was a fashionable "first night" in New York.

"Another hit for Julia Woods," said the younger of the men.

"Another triumph of the absence of temperament," said the older.

They turned into a side street, then down a cheap avenue, where pawnshops alternated with French and Italian boarding-houses. High, on the top floor, where the ceiling sloped at a sharp angle, a dim light twinkled fitfully.

"That is where Betty Gilbert is staying," said the older man.

"Convenient to the pawnshop," laughed the younger man, nodding toward the gleam-

ing three balls next door. "I saw her coming out, looking glum, yesterday."

"Nothing left to pawn, but promises, probably, and pawn-brokers, like others, hold them cheap."

The man's downward-drawn mouth wore an unpleasant smile. He lifted his eyes again to the far window, where the light twinkled feebly.

"There, my lad, you have a triumph of temperament."

And they passed on.

From the stage door of the Empire a slight figure, wrapped in a long cloak, came out, followed by a stouter one. The two got into the last waiting carriage, that was banked high with flowers, looking like a great floral chariot.

"Open the windows, Mary. The perfume of these flowers is stifling."

Julia Woods laid her head back upon the cushions. Her maid noticed anew with a throb of pity for her mistress how frail she looked.

"Do you think you ought to call on her to-night, Miss Julia? Won't you send me to-morrow?"

"That is exactly what she asks me not to do," said the actress, smiling.

She drew a crumpled note from her glove.

"Don't send your maid as you would to another case of charity. I want to see you, Julia Woods."

"It seems to me a pert letter, Miss. Do you know her?"

"Yes, I knew her well a good many years ago," and again the maid noticed the weariness in the face and voice.

"This is the place."

Miss Woods peered from the window at the misnamed Maison Riche, where one light twinkled faintly high under the roof.

"It's an eerie place, Miss. You'll let me go with you?"

"Only to the hall, Mary. Wait until I come down."

She climbed the three flights of stairs in the dark halls and tapped at the door in front.

"Come."

The voice was impatient, child-like, but there was a rich, womanly tone in it. It was a contradictory voice and might puzzle one who did not know its owner. Julia Woods was thinking this, as, with a half smile, she pushed back the door and entered.

"Come in," the voice continued. "I knew you would come, though Ned and the rest said you wouldn't."

"You see you were right."

Julia Woods moved nearer and stood looking down at the woman on the bed. Neither offered to greet each other more warmly, although they had not met for ten years. They had always been, by nature, antagonistic. Both felt the old antagonism stirring within them. They looked at each other curiously with the wonder each had always felt for the other, as for a strange species.

Julia Woods saw a splendid creature of opulent womanhood still, for she was gilding her with the colors of memory. A woman with amber eyes, in which strange fires smoul-

dered or leapt as the winds of her emotions willed, with billows of chestnut hair, tinted with the warmth of the sun, a face of perfect outline, and full, red lips that wooed even while they would have repelled. Betty Gilbert smiled as she saw that the illusion remained. She still had a good eye for effects. The light burned low.

"Be seated, Nun."

The Julia Woods knew that she, too, looked the same to the other—narrow chested, high shouldered, with wan, irregular features, pale, gold hair, and gray eyes that looked straight and steady and beyond her. And she knew that she still scorned her as a pale, feeble thing.

At the sound of the old name she sat down near the bed and tried to smile.

"This has been a great opening."

Julia Woods caught the faint sneer, struggling with wistfulness, in the woman's tone.

"The play went better than I expected, though there are ever so many things I want to see improved."

"You were always modest. I heard that success had not turned your head."

She seemed to admit this reluctantly.

"You are very kind. Did you want to see me especially?"

"Yes; for several reasons. In the first place I am down. You must know that I have been tobogganing it, though it hasn't all been my fault. I need work."

"On the stage?"

"Certainly. I have never given up my profession." Her assumption of dignity was ludicrous in the half-light of the bare room, ludicrous and pitiful. The child-note sounded again in her voice. "But the managers won't see me any more, and the agents insult me. I need influence."

Julia Woods looked at her curiously.

"And you want mine?"

"Yes."

Again the women measured each other with their eyes. They had the sensation of sparring, of guarding, of being keenly on the defensive.

The star's delicate lips straightened themselves in a thin, pale line of resolve.

"I will help you," she said, "but not in the way you expect."

"You will not speak to the managers or agents for me?"

"I cannot. It would be dishonest; you know it."

The woman tossed impatiently. Her visitor began to see the haggard lines, despite the low light.

"I could not promise that you would not break your contract in mid-season, or before. I could not promise that you would not insist upon the manager's putting into the company some incompetent favorite of yours, old or new. I could not tell him that you would let drink or drugs alone."

Betty Gilbert was a woman of many moods. That of the beggar was uppermost now.

"I haven't a cent, and I owe for five weeks to this beast of a hotelkeeper," she whined.

"I will not ask anyone to give you work. They would not do it if I did. But I will

send you to some place in the country, some sanitarium if you like, where you may rest and grow strong again for a year."

They looked at each other again with those closely measuring glances.

"Why would you do this for me, Julia Woods? It isn't"—she laughed harshly—"because you like me, or ever did like me."

"It is because"—Julia Woods spoke very slowly—"I would be afraid to do an unkindness or leave a kindness undone. That is my superstition, my one fear."

"You have reason to dislike me, Nun."

The woman's voice was soft, but the actress blanched at the sound of it. She drew her cloak around her and rose. She spoke hurriedly, ignoring the speech.

"You will hear from me in a few days," she said. "Perhaps to-morrow. I must go now, for I am very tired."

The face on the pillow was humble.

"You are very good, little Nun," she said. "You have brought the perfume of the flowers with you."

She drew in the delicate essence with a long inhalation of delight. Then the amber eyes grew dark and dangerous.

"You poor, pale little creature!" she flung out, passionately. "Why are you not where I am, and I in your place? I am beautiful, and as clever as you. I have temperament; you have not. Why is it thus with us? Why? Why?"

"Because"—in Julia Woods's voice there was the chill of steel—"because you have scattered when I have hoarded. You have had impulses when I have had purposes. You have had loves, while I have had—hopes."

Betty Gilbert flashed back at her in splendid scorn.

"I have lived"—she laughed cruelly—"while you have studied; and for what?"—then her voice broke—"I have never known an ambitious person who was not selfish," she complained.

Miss Woods steadied her voice by a great effort.

"If it is selfish to want to develop the best

that is in you, because you feel that it is your duty, and know, in a dim way, that by so doing you help the human race, then ambition is selfish."

"You always did talk about things neither you nor anybody else understood." Betty's tone was petulant now. "You always pretended to use the logic of men."

"Women need the logic of men." Miss Woods spoke with firmness of unshakable conviction. "It will save them from the unhappiness of women."

In Betty there had set in a counter current of mood. She was curious again.

"They say yours is the life of a recluse, Nun; that when you are not playing you are burrowing among books. Howard Loeser said yesterday that your idea of heaven is a library. Why don't you know people?"

"I don't need to let them into my home and into my life to study them. I see them on the trains and in the shops and in the parks. Besides, we have several kinds of persons within ourselves whom we may study. You must know that." There was a shade of

irony in the gentle voice. "Besides"—the voice regained the plaintive sweetness that stirred her audiences—"I am not strong enough for more than one life, and I have chosen that of the student."

The light was so low now that they could not see each other's faces.

"We are the same age," Betty mused. "At school I always had a contempt for you; you were such a shadow of a girl. One of our teachers said you were a water-color and I an oil. But you are a star and I am an outcast. Did you know that I danced and sang in a dive last week?" There was no answer. Betty heard the door slowly open. "You are a star. I am an outcast. But I have been loved as you never could be, and I took your lover from you."

Mary, waiting below, heard the door open and heard a half-mad laugh from someone within. Julia Woods's slender figure swayed in the darkness and Mary ran to meet her. The maid's searching hands found that hers were cold as ice.

"What was the matter with the poor woman, Miss Julia?"

"Nothing," said the star, as she settled into a corner of the carriage. "Not much, at any rate. The light went out, and I think —we were a little afraid of each other—up there in the dark—alone—together."

Betty Gilbert, who had half slid from her bed at the sound of the opening of the door, following she knew not what awful impulse, lay back again and listened as the carriage-wheels rolled away.

"I might have told her he asked for her when he was dying, that she was the only one he remembered and cared for then," she said, in a choking voice, "but I didn't, and I'm glad! I'm glad!" She clenched the pillows deep with her angry nails. "O, I'm glad!" she said.

She reached beneath the pillow for a purple velvet case. She drew a needle from it and thrust it deep into her arm. In a few minutes her set features relaxed into a smile and she slept.

Miss Woods was silent on their drive to her home, near Central Park.

When Mary brought her her coffee and the morning papers the next day the actress's sleepless eyes looked at her dully from a wan face.

"The notices are splendid, Miss; the best you've ever had. Hilary Bell calls you 'a younger Duse.'"

Julia Woods turned her white face to the wall.

"What does it matter?" she sighed.

A young actress, smartly dressed and with happy eyes, was just then climbing the narrow stairs to Betty Gilbert's room. Her atmosphere was like a sea-breeze.

"I'm going to star next season with Hilton! Isn't it splendid? O, my dear! Do you remember, when I called on you about going on the stage, you said 'Don't'?"

"I remember," said Miss Gilbert, slowly, her fingers touching the lace at the girl's wrist. "I was wrong, but I didn't know you then. I didn't know that you were strong

enough to play—play—play, even if your heart were breaking. I did not know that you would keep on, on, on, even though your soul was in a torment. I could not play unless I was at peace with myself. If the devils within lashed me I could not remember that I was an actress, and forget that I was a sorrowing, frantic woman. You are broad enough to see the world in its entirety. I could see in it only one person at a time. You can classify, but I judged all the world by one person. You are a centripetal, I a centrifugal, force. You conserve, I scatter. You should have been an actress, I should not. . . .

"Get me a Shakespeare; it's there on the shelf; it's the only one book I have left. Ah! here it is! If I had read this, read it into my very soul, as I have since, it would all have been so different. Julia Woods lives by it, I know. Read the lines. I can't see."

"Love all, trust few;
Do wrong to none; be able for thine enemy
Rather in power than use, and keep thy friend
Under thine own life's key; be checked for silence
But never overtaxed for speech."

The young actress threw her arms about the sick woman and cried stormily.

"Don't," said Betty Gilbert, weakly, "don't scatter your forces so. Live as Julia Woods has done, a hermit of the library. Insulate yourself with a thousand reserves. Make that the law of your life. Play for the world. Love no one individually, all collectively. So you were made."

"I—"—the woman laughed strangely, and the laugh died into a whisper—"O—I—Frou-Frou—always Frou-Frou."

That afternoon Mary brought a check from Julia Woods. The amount was so large that it would have surprised the wilful woman in the room under the eaves, had she been there to receive it; but she had gone. They found that the needle under the pillow was quite empty. The last-act curtain had fallen.

She was buried by the Actors' Fund.

He Married an Actress

He Married an Actress

EORGE CARLETON was more surprised than were any of his friends when he married Miss Alice Greeley of the "Message from the Moon" Company.

He had always held such strong views—he grew angry if anyone dared to call them prejudices — regarding the stage and the people of the stage.

His views about wives had been equally positive. He would marry a small woman and a dark woman. Not that he admired the type particularly, but he had a fancy that such women were more domestic and so made better wives and mothers. He would never marry a business or professional woman of any sort. Heaven forbid! They were so

offensive, sometimes, in their quick readings of a man. A girl who had been brought up in what he chose to call the "sheltered twilight" of home was the one for him. That was fully settled.

Yet here he was, married to an actress. George Carleton was astonished. He could give no reasonable excuse to his friends or to himself. He only knew that when this tall girl, whose shining golden head was on a level with his own, smiled at him equally with her soft blue eyes and her pink thread of a mouth, in which her white teeth gleamed with dainty evenness, that his objections to the stage vanished. The earth narrowed to those two and faded away, and in its place was heaven. He was conscious that this, while it was human enough, was scarcely logical, so he attempted no excuse.

He was married and he was happier than he had thought any man could ever be. He set about a necessary readjustment of his ideas.

Alice was the daughter of a manager and

a leading woman, and she had all but been born upon the stage, and she had been playing almost ever since that event. She had "travelled" and had lived at hotels, spent her summers in theatrical colonies on Long Island, and home had been as vague a name to her as God is to the dancing dervishes. But when they had come, after the wedding at the Little Church Around the Corner, to their tiny apartment on East Fifty-ninth Street, she had dropped her shining head on his shoulder and cried for joy.

"Tears on our wedding-day?" he protested.

"Forgive me, George! I was crying because I am so happy to have a home. Just think, George! A home!"

Alice was a happy iconoclast. No sooner were they married than she set about shattering all his preconceptions about actresses.

He had thought that they affected vermilion hair and screaming costumes. His wife always wore black or gray for the street.

He had thought that jewelry was indis-

pensable to their happiness. Alice never wore it.

He had believed that their lives were a never-ceasing parade. But Alice rarely went out except for strolls up the avenue and through the park with him.

He thought they could not live except as the centre of a shrieking magpie group like themselves. If their portly coffee-colored maid-of-all-work brought a card Alice was always "out," unless he insisted that she was "in."

There had been a year of this life when one morning he found her in her pretty morning negligée standing beside his desk, pressing his hard-working fountain-pen to her lips. That tableau of devotion had lived with him all day, in his trying interview with prospective publishers, and in his calls with a view to collections from the old ones. It fortified him for the sight of the bulky yellow envelope that shouted "Rejected!" at him from their mail-box. It made him seize the little fingers that were mending a rent

in the parlor curtains and reverently kiss them.

After she had gone to the matinée the blow fell. In her hurried dressing she had drawn a paper from the drawer that was still open. It had fallen to the floor. It was so large that he thought it a contract with his last publisher. He opened it. He groaned.

"My God! I was right. They are all alike! O Alice! Alice!"

She tripped in cheerily just as the city's blackness was relieved by the turning on of myriads of lights. She turned on the gas and looked smilingly about for her husband. He was sitting at the edge of the bed, the paper still in his fingers.

"You naughty boy!" she laughed. "So you've found your Christmas gift already?"

He lifted sullen, inquiring eyes to her face.

"How long have you had this?"

"Since yesterday."

"How did you get it?"

"I bought it with my savings from my salary since we were married."

"A lot at Orange?"

She nodded while the tears drowned the joy in her eyes as they had done the evening of their wedding when she surveyed the little flat and cried at the thought of a home.

"You will not be sensitive about it, dear?" she pleaded. "Those horrid publishers are so slow about seeing the value of your books, and I knew how you loved the country. I thought you could write more satisfactorily there. In another year we can build a house together in this lot, or if you haven't your last novel on sale, then maybe I can save enough to put up a small one. Aren't you glad, dearest?"

Carleton rested his forehead for a moment on her strong young shoulder. She noticed afterward that her dress was wet where his face had rested.

"Are you tired?" she asked him, wonderingly.

"I have had a bad day," he admitted, thinking of the hours he had sat at the edge of the bed holding the deed in his fingers.

"Your ability will be recognized. You will be known as one of the greatest authors of your time."

"Alice," he asked, impulsively, "can you ever forgive me?"

"For what, George?"

"For everything. For any foolish suspicions I may have ever had because you had not had a home, nor a home influence."

"But I have both now, dear," she said, looking at him with bright, trusting eyes. "And you could never have been suspicious after you knew me."

He hung his head while pretending to rearrange his necktie.

"Dinner's ready," announced the portly, coffee-colored maid.

Three Friends

Three Friends

"SHE'S an angel!"

"He's a brute!"

"Something must be done, but what?"

The leading man, slim, elegant in his evening clothes, twirled his crush hat in his hands and looked at the comedian, burly and grotesque as an East End cockney. He had come into his friend, the comedian's dressing-room, to wait for the "First Act." A swiftly passing figure in a gray cloak and with a small head that seemed to bend under its weight of pale gold hair as a lily bows under the weight of its own sweetness had provoked the dialogue. A glimpse of Edith Glyndon, juvenile, and wife of George Glyndon, the orchestra leader, always caused these friends to

resolve themselves into a committee of ways and means. But the committee had never offered for adoption a formal report.

Everyone knew that George Glyndon was a brutal husband. Every male member of it had some time or other caught the huge muscled arm that had been raised to strike the cowering girl, and every woman in it had said, with unconscious dramatic effect, "Hold your tongue, you beast!" when he struck her with words that hurt worse than his blows. He had wearied of her since the day five years ago when she had eloped with him from her aunt's pretty cottage in Devonshire. Had she been a spirited woman the weariness might not have come so soon, perhaps not at all, although all agreed that there was "not a good bone in George Glyndon's body." But this slight girl, in whose cheeks the English roses had changed to lilies, knew no such thing as defiance. She had been taught that submission was the chief end of woman and she was faithful to her creed. Tears might be wrung from her, but never an indignant

word. And now that she was ill and more than ever silent and submissive it was plain that Glyndon hated her, with the cruel hatred of the healthy animal for the ailing.

Yet despite the scenes at the theatre the management would not dismiss its orchestra leader. They saw to it that he was sober at rehearsals and performances, and that done, the managerial responsibility ended. The "private affairs" of their employees did not interest the managers of His Majesty's Theatre. And George Glyndon was a valuable man, for no orchestra in the kingdom was so well trained as were the players at His Majesty's. The brute made way for some sublime spirit of the upper airs from eight until eleven, to resume its sway at exactly eleven fifteen.

"What?" repeated the comedian, settling his cap well over his ear after they had reviewed the situation here set forth.

"What indeed?" The leading man stopped twirling his hat and interrogated with his eyes.

"If she loved a man she would leave that brute for him."

"Then why not—"

"Just what I was going to say. 'Why not?' She doesn't love me."

"But—"

"She does, Linton. I can read the language of a woman's eyes, if you can't. You are the man who can save her. I wouldn't say this if I hadn't understood you ever since she joined the company, old chap."

The men gripped each other's hands, and then, after the manner of men who feel deeply, were suddenly struck dumb and separated in a shamefaced way. Linton Southmer went to the stage in answer to "First Act" and Jim Ravelle stayed behind to wait his cue. His hand shook when he lit his cigar, which went out finally because of his feeble attention to it, and he sat staring at the gray plaster of his dressing-room, a dumb, pathetic patience in his eyes. There had always been something dull and bovine about Jim.

That was the way it happened that a

pretty cottage outside the city was taken by a man and a lovely, frail-looking young woman, who had one frequent visitor, a square-built man with an honest, patient face and ox-like eyes.

Southmer had two successful seasons. The average critics were lavish of their complimentary adjectives. Their king, he whose praise was as rare as deep-water pearls, was gracious. And in the cottage there were peace and happiness, save when the spectre chose to walk shadow-like through its bright rooms and chill their hearts. Edith Glyndon was growing weaker. They could not hide the fact, cheat each other with loving delusions as they might. Here the doctors agreed alarmingly.

"Slow consumption," they all said. "It may be several years away, but the end is sure."

Perhaps it was because the news benumbed his energies and made his acting automaton-like. Perhaps it was only the ebb tide in the player's fortunes that will change to flood

again if he be patient and strong. But it befell that at the opening of the third season he was without an engagement. Jim Ravelle had been re-engaged at an advance of salary for His Majesty's, but when Southmer's quest for an engagement proved fruitless he gave up his engagement and he and Southmer did a specialty at the Alhambra. It was but an indifferent success, though it led to Southmer's getting occasional engagements in the city for a monologue. Ravelle at mid-season joined a province-touring company.

Letters came to him from the cottage—sad letters all—some in Southmer's nervous hand, some in Edith's faint, characterless one. London was getting tired of the monologue, and there was no other engagement in prospect. They must give up the cottage and take lodgings in the city. Ravelle's reply contained much sympathy and a check he could little spare.

"I insist upon loaning you this, old man, so that it will be taken care of,"

he wrote. "I'm such an extravagant beggar."

He patronized third-rate hotels after that, so that he might save a margin for "them," but he always used the letter-heads of the first-class hotels.

He came back after two years. They were living on the top floor of a cheap lodging-house. The dust-colored fog crowded in at a score of crevices and formed faint wraith-like shapes before it melted away into the chill of the bare rooms.

Southmer was ill, and a tall, ghost-like woman with pale gold hair was leaning over his bed. She cried a little and said pretty, feminine, fluttering things when she saw him. The two men gripped each other's hands, and that old silence, shamefaced and wistful, weighted with the memories of the long years since their boyhood, fell between them.

"You haven't had your walk to-day, dear," said Southmer, at last. "Go now, and Jim will sit with me."

With the same silent, unquestioning sub-

mission he remembered, Edith Glyndon left the room, and they heard her faint, dragging step descending the stairs.

"I'm going, Jim," Southmer said, in a husky voice. "It's quick consumption; but don't let her know, for she thinks I have contracted it by taking care of her, and it breaks her heart. I'm willing to go, old man, for it's been a hard fight, with luck against me from the first.

"I'm sorry for just one thing. It's hard to leave her alone. I wanted to give her my name in fact, but divorces are slow in England. We've been trying to arrange this ever since the first, you know, but we've failed. My brother, who cast me off for this, has since married a divorced woman in America.

"They strike off the shackles there in a few hours I'm told.

"When I'm gone she'll be alone, ill and friendless and destitute. I've known how it is with you for a long time, Jim. It has come to me by degrees, somehow. Take care

of her, and when she is free, marry her. Will you, Jim?"

Jim answered with a silent pressure of the hand, for they heard her soft step in the hall and her hand was turning the knob.

On Christmas Eve Linton Southmer called them both to his bedside. He placed one hand in Edith's and Ravelle grasped the other. With his faint remaining strength he tried to draw them together. Then his eyes closed. Someone had called "Last Act."

A week later George Glyndon died suddenly, killed, some said, in a tavern brawl; but it was given out at His Majesty's that he had died from a paralytic stroke, and the orchestra leader's union drew up lengthy and unctuous resolutions in memorial to "our esteemed and honorable brother."

On New Year's Day Edith Glyndon and James Ravelle were married. He cared for her tenderly, as a brother. The waning life was brightened by all the tendernesses the "brotherly affection" he laughingly referred

to, in answer to all her thanks, could suggest.

The manager of a company going to New York for a long engagement offered him the title rôle. He reserved his decision until the next day.

He found the wraith of a woman who was his wife in name sitting at the window looking with luminous eyes at something she alone saw in the glories of the sunset.

He lifted the thin, blue-white fingers to his lips. He told her gently of the offer.

"Do you want to go, Edith?"

"I can't, Jim. I am not strong enough. Besides, I would be so far from Linton's grave."

James Ravelle refused the manager's offer and played a minor part in a London theatre.

Every day when the weather was fair he took Mrs. Ravelle to the cemetery, and while she knelt at Linton Southmer's grave he stood beside her, looking at the slim, bent figure and the pale gold hair. When she was

no longer able to leave the house he gave up his engagement to watch beside her.

One spring afternoon, with the sound of busy, brutal life surging up from the streets and the sunshine falling across her bed, she complained that it had grown dark.

The actor knelt beside her and clasped the transparent hand.

"I cannot see," she said, querulously. "Where are you, Jim?" Suddenly she lifted her head. Her voice rang out full, strong, rejoicing.

"Linton!" she cried. Her head sank back to the pillow. A great joy transfigured her features. Then came an awesome silence, broken at last by a strong man's sobs.

"My love! My love!"

He buried her, as he had promised, beside Linton Southmer.

It is one of the mysteries of the profession why Jim Ravelle has never married.

The Understudy

The Understudy

"MISS MILTON will never give me a chance to sing her part. I know she won't."

Irene Gray plucked at the ragged edges of the once ornamental tablecloth in the dingy boarding-house parlor. Anger faded into dejection and she rested her elbows on the table and her pretty flushed face in her hands and looked appealingly at George Hammerton. Irene often told the other girls in the Amy Milton Opera Company that she could not remember the time she hadn't known George.

"Why, I tell him everything," she said.

And so she had; even the tale of that August at Long Branch, when she thought she had fallen in love with a man from Phila-

delphia and how he had gone home without "really saying anything," and how life had never seemed the same after she had learned that he was a married man who had affected the seaside resorts while his wife and children were in the mountains. Had Irene noticed, she would have seen George clench his big hands nervously during the recital, but she wasn't in the habit of noticing George much. You don't when you have known people always, you know. So she told the other girls in the company, and when Lillie James, who wore pink tarlatan and "did a specialty," asked her to introduce the young broker, she said, "Why, certainly!"

Lillie, who aspired to be a *première danseuse*, touched the bow on Irene's shoulder daintily with her toe.

"You don't care to keep him all to yourself," she remarked with a sidelong glance.

"George? Oh, no!" said Irene, wonderingly, and touching up her upper lip a bit as she heard the call-boy's "Second Act."

This afternoon she was telling George "everything," as usual.

Irene, it must be admitted, was from the country. It must also be admitted that she was *gauche*. Candor requires a further admission. She had been on the stage three years and was still in the chorus. But she was Miss Milton's understudy, and she lay awake nights thinking of the time when Miss Milton should have a sore throat and she should sing her part, and only Miss Milton's special friends should know the difference, Miss Milton's special friends and the newspapers. The last would talk about her "wondrous art." She had seen that phrase once and it had haunted her. It would look so well opposite "Irene Gray."

"But she'll never give me the chance," she complained this afternoon to George Hammerton.

George listened impatiently. The story was not a new one. It was beyond his memory and mathematical powers to calculate just how often he had heard it. Being a man,

he had some latent selfishness, almost as much as a woman. And he had his own heart needs and his own homely ambition, although he never spoke of them. He only looked wistfully at the self-centred little being and listened with his thoughts far from Miss Milton and her arias.

"Hang it all, Irene! Why ruin your temper and waste your life in this sort of thing?" he broke out. "Why don't you marry?"

He had been walking the floor of Mrs. O'Rourke's parlor to the serious menace of the ancient carpet. At Irene's resentful "Marry whom?" he stopped his march and looked long at her. He saw vexation in the small face, nothing more, and he felt suddenly foolish and awkward.

"Someone might be found," he ventured.

"Possibly by publishing a personal, 'object matrimony,'" she answered, scornfully.

Just then Lillie James "dropped" in. Welcome or not, there she was. They dis-

pensed with the formality of announcing visitors at Mrs. O'Rourke's. Irene presented George Hammerton.

"We grew on adjoining farms out West," she explained absently, her thoughts still upon the possibility of Miss Milton's ever "giving her a chance to sing her part."

Lillie fluttered into a chair close to the broker's. She smiled archly at him and said he reminded her of a cousin of hers out West. She did love the West. Lillie was a wise woman. On their walk home she never once referred to the theatre except to say as she passed it that she wished she might never see the "sickening old place again." She coaxed the young man to tell her how he had left the farm seven years ago and risen step by step until he was a member of the firm. She didn't say a word. Her comments were in her wide, admiring eyes. It was so different from those monologues in Mrs. O'Rourke's parlor. Of course he invited her to supper after the opera that night. And she, hesitating as coyly as though she had

never had an invitation to supper before, finally accepted.

Irene, hurrying out of the stage door, saw them getting into a cab. She bowed stiffly and went on frowning. The manager had told her that Miss Milton's mother was ill and she must have a rehearsal in the morning.

"Don't know that she'll be called to Boston, but she may. We must be ready," he said.

The "chance" was assuming a form. She must sleep well so that she would be in "good voice" for rehearsal. But Irene didn't sleep well.

"Isn't it absurd! I'm actually lying here thinking of George and Lillie. Lillie's a nice girl, but so designing."

She buried her curly head deep in the pillow and counted imaginary white sheep jumping an imaginary fence.

"Six, seven, eight—George never asks me to supper any more. These late suppers are ruinous to the voice. I'm glad I never eat

them. I wonder whether they went to Rector's."

Much tossing and opening the small window of the hall bedroom wider.

"Such a suffocating night! Fifteen, sixteen—George looks almost handsome in evening clothes. Nineteen. Lillie wore her biscuit cloth trimmed with gold braid. She calls that her gown for conquest. I wonder if she thinks she can make a fool of George? How ridiculous!"

It was so ridiculous that she sat upright in bed and laughed hollowly as she stared at the darkness.

Irene met Lillie at the stage door at the noon rehearsal. Lillie simpered and Irene looked ill-tempered.

"Your friend's charming, and what a flirt! I'm afraid I'll really lose my heart this time," said the danseuse of the future.

"A flirt! George never had that reputation at home," said the prospective star, tartly. "She wants me to tell him she thinks he's charming and she's losing her heart, but

I won't," she thought, with an unbecoming tightening of the lips.

"But men learn so much when they leave home," Lillie drawled, simpering again.

The manager was cross. Irene did her best, but he was brute enough to say she had acquired a wide crack in her voice since yesterday, and she cried behind a newspaper all the way home in the street-car. She hoped George would call. She wanted to tell him "everything." He didn't, and that evening she saw a note in his handwriting addressed to Lillie James. It lay just below the mirror Lillie used at the end of the long dressing-table used by seven "ladies of the chorus." Irene's hand hovered above it, but she drew it back, shocked at her evil impulse. Lillie sauntered in singing. She snatched the note from the table, read it, and ostentatiously tucked it into her corsage.

"You're pale to-night, 'Rene. What's the matter?"

A loud rap at the door. The stage manager burst in and handed Irene a telegram.

"Milton just left for Boston. You've got to sing. Here's the key to her dressing-room. Get into her things and hurry up."

He slammed the door. "Oh, bully!" said the good-natured "ladies of the chorus." "Pf-f!" said the acid-tempered ones.

Irene made a running entrance. Miss Milton made it effective, but Milton was born in Paris, and I have said that Irene was born in the country and was *gauche*. She stumbled, and three gallery gods laughed. As she picked herself up among her unaccustomed draperies she saw George Hammerton in front.

She saw the dark body in front as through a mist. Her voice sounded strange. She had missed a bar. Heavens! And her breath was leaving her. She tripped upon her train as she made her exit. The audience was silent save for five kind souls. One of these clapped loud enough for three. It was George Hammerton.

Irene cried piteously in her dressing-room. A visit from the stage manager made her cry

the harder. She said she would not go on again. He said she must, and she did.

The first act was bad, the second worse, the third worst. The five kind souls were loyal. The orchestra was apathetic and part of it went home early. The ingenuous gallery joked and hissed.

A lonely little figure crept out of the stage entrance and was met by a big, sympathetic one.

"Oh, George!" Irene gasped. "It was awful. I can never look at anyone again."

He hailed a passing hansom and lifted her into it. "Aren't you going—to—take Lillie?" she sobbed.

"No. She invited me to meet some friends, but I declined. I wanted to see you, Irene."

"Will anyone ever want to see me again? Oh, George, I have failed! I have failed!"

George Hammerton took the trembling little figure in his arms and drew the curly head to his shoulder.

"Be my understudy, Irene," he said. "I

will give you every chance. You shall be a star in my home. Be my prima donna and sing only for me."

She sat up straight and dignified for an instant. "You flirted with Lillie," she charged.

"Not guilty," he said, laughing. "I took her to supper, because she seemed so sweet and sisterly and sympathetic."

"She's a designing little beast."

"Well, well, perhaps," Hammerton returned, ungallantly.

"It was worrying about you and her and that note that made me such a 'frost' tonight. I believe I'll just try again."

"No, you won't," said George Hammerton, assertively, and she didn't.

From that date Irene Gray filled only private engagements.

Heard at the Managers' Club

Heard at the Managers' Club

OE GRIMSTON" he had been when he "shined shoes" and sold newspapers on the banks of the odorous Chicago River and "Joe Grimston" he was still when the lackey, who opened the door of the Managers' Club, measured his importance by the lowest bow and widest grin bestowed upon any member of that body of exclusive New York amusement promoters.

True, he signed his contracts with the leading American and European stars and made all his booking arrangements over the signature of Joseph T. Grimston. His wife, who was a non-professional and "adored" society as ardently as she "abhorred" the stage, kept a standing card-plate, engraved "Mrs.

Joseph Tilton Grimston," at the stationer's the year round. A magazine that had asked him for a definition and an analysis of temperament, suggested that he change the form of his autograph to J. Tilton Grimston.

"Why?"

The demand was made in a gruff tone and the pink-and-white young man from the ten-cent medium of information looked frightened.

"O—nothing, really—only it's the present —mode."

"D——n the present mode!" growled the great man of the syndicate. Then he smiled and passed his cigar-case to the quaking youth.

"My wife looks after the 'present mode' at home, and I have to conform to it in my stage sets and dressing. After that I kick loose from it. Young man, if you're not good, I'll sign 'Joe' Grimston. That's the name I blacked shoes by, and sold newspapers by, and rode in the circus by. It's the name I gave my first school of acting." Here he

grinned. "No politeness of fair speech like it, and I'd use it yet, but my d——d finical lawyer says it's not legal. So I'll concede you 'Joseph T. Grimston,' no more."

The telephone summoned him to his offices, and he sent back his gin-rickey, untasted.

"Only three minutes to get to the office." He bustled to the door. "Good-morning, gentlemen."

The pink-and-white youth stood timidly at the door a moment. Then he approached the manager of the best musical comedies in town, who was smoking his native meerschaum.

"Pardon me. Will you give me something besides the bare biographical facts about Mr. Grimston? We want to publish a short character-study of him to lead his views on 'temperament.'"

"Something besides the bare biographical facts," repeated the man with the meerschaum. "Then you know that he was born in a mining-camp in California, and that he ran away twice a year from the time he could

walk. His father was the sheriff of the county. I suppose you know that, and that his father said he had more trouble with that brat of his than with all the cut-throats in his hundred-mile 'circuit.' 'There's nothing bad about him,' he said. 'It's just that he's always so d——d unexpected.'"

"His semi-annual runaway was for a longer period than usual when he was ten years old. After a week his father found him pouring all the ardor of his being into bones. He had joined a minstrel troup and was the child-star. How he loved the burnt cork and the jokes and the coarse, jolly fellows who formed the black crescent on the stage. It was a gray day when his father took him away, and the only rift in the clouds that gave him a glimpse of sunshine was that he was able to wave a greenback before his father's astonished eyes and pay for both their tickets home. He had gained a niche in his father's respect. He was entitled to the esteem which the moneymaker always commands."

The speaker laid aside his deliciously stained meerschaum. His eyes had the level, sizing-up look with which he regarded the raw recruits of the chorus on first rehearsal day.

"It was when he was twelve years old that he ran away with a circus. He came back in two weeks, his feet swollen and cut by stone-bruises, his mind cleared of the mist of illusion about the life of the circus-performers. He could never endure the smell of wild animals afterward.

"But when his father interviewed him behind the barn in a way he had, an experience that always followed his return home after a runaway, Joe wouldn't retract. He said: 'I believe in the show business as much as ever, but not with animals.'

"That circus experience has stuck to him. Now, I have an imitation of a bear in my new musical farce, and there's a cat in an extravaganza farther down the street. They draw. But Joe won't have them. He thinks anything in the shape of an animal is a hoodoo

for him. They say that a tiger-cub clawed him once and he can't forget it.

"When he was thirteen he told his father he was tired of the mines. 'I haven't seen very much money coming out of them,' he said. 'Besides, I don't care so much about money, anyway. I want to mix with people and go with the show business and have a show of my own some day.' And although his father conjured up visions of the back of the barn and the stinging-strap and hinted that he might try them as a preventive, since they had failed as a cure, Joe slipped out the back window of the garret and made for the woods.

"He laid down on the ground and tucked his bundle of clothes he had under him and the firs sang a whispering chorus that soothed him to sleep and repeated itself in his dreams. He has a hundred times told me what an effective motif the slumber chorus of the firs might be made. 'It can't be done, Joe,' I've said. He would crack his fingers contemptuously and say: 'If I knew a thing about

music, just the first thing, I'd show you! There's nothing you can't do if you want to enough, George.'

"He walked to Sacramento, and, though he hung around the theatres persistently there was nothing for him then, and he had to take to blacking boots. He saved up a little at this, for people paid him for his bright face, as well as for his bright shines. That's true; I tell you a sunshiny face is a moneymaker, as well as a happiness-radiator. Try it, young fellow. You're too glum. That phiz of yours will interfere with business. If I hadn't just made splendid bookings for my new show I wouldn't be here prattling to you. It's in spite of that scared-to-death face of yours and because I like Joe and want the public to know him as I know him that I am playing opposite to you for an hour. You need a good, stiff mental bracer. Get one, somehow. It will pay you."

"I'm sure you're right, Mr. Lamson."

"That's right, only don't say it with a whine. Of course I am!"

"Talking about Joe?" An actor-manager stopped to listen.

"Yes; tell a few of his characteristics while I put a new stain on my pet."

And the mentor with a prefix spelling "tor" to the lad from the magazine picked up the object of his greatest tenderness, the meerschaum.

"My first meeting with Joe was a queer one," said the actor-manager. "My wife and I were playing at McVickar's, in Chicago. We were on our way to rehearsal one dismal, rainy morning. My wife slipped, and before I, awkward brute! could catch her she had fallen, and her 'playbooks' went careening wildly before the wind, their yellow covers looking like big autumn leaves that were out for a dance. A dirty, shabby little chap with a bundle of unsold papers under his arm, shrewd and keen and kindly below his shock of unkempt hair, ran toward us and tried to brush the mud from Billy's—I call my wife Billy when she's amiable and Bill when she's not you know—dress. He handed

her her umbrella before I could get at it; he was as quick as an imp, and scampered around and picked up the bespattered plays. His eyes danced with wild joy as he put them into my wife's hand.

"'You are an actress, ain't you?' he said.

"'Yes,' she answered, giving him one of those dazzlers of hers. Did you ever see her smile from the front? Great, isn't it?

"Well, that little starved gamin warmed himself in it, so to speak, and she saw it and gave him another. 'How did you know?'

"'O, I buy these books—sometimes. I could act great myself, if I had a chance.'

"My wife laughed and thanked him for his help and I offered him some change. He blushed—fancy a Chicago newsboy blushing!

"'Say, I don't want your money,' he said, 'but if you don't mind, I wish you would give me one of those books.'

"'Certainly,' my wife said. 'Make your choice.'

"'Take my pick?' he said, unbelieving,

his face looking like a sunburst. And what do you think he chose? 'Othello,' as you live.

"We said good-by and hurried away to the rehearsal. Looking back, we saw that he was following at a respectful distance, his newspapers forgotten, the joy of a new discovery in his eyes.

"It was a year afterward that my wife came home from a mild slumming tour with some visiting cousins, her eyes beaming with surprise and delight.

"'We took in the Eden Musee,' she said, 'and who do you suppose was doing a tumbling and dancing act but the boy who took my 'Othello.' We were there for an hour, and those poor children were on six times. Something had gone wrong with the bill and they were working those little chaps to death. We went around to the stage door to see them. They were trying to eat a sandwich, but before they had taken the first bite they heard the call, 'Rice and Flynn,' and had to run. They told me their dressing-room was up

three flights of stairs, and that sometimes they hadn't gotten half way up when they were called again. 'Tain't noon yet,' said ragged Joe, 'but we've been on twenty times. Yes, 'tain't easy, but it's a start. Starts ain't ever easy, are they?'

"After a while we saw him in a specialty that was so bad, and yet so good, that it stood out and the star complained to the manager, and most of his business was cut.

"When my wife opened as an independent star she got a bunch of roses with Joe's name and wishes for success. She sent for him, and he told her how he had gone on after that beginning in the Eden Musée.

"'We were so tired that night of our first appearance as Rice and Flynn that we went to bed with our make-up on; and we dreamed we heard them calling us, and tumbled out of bed and began to do our act so vigorously that it woke us up,' he said. 'The next morning we were the proudest boys in New York. The other newsies came around and looked at us as though we were the elephant

in the parade. Speaking of the elephant, I joined a circus the next summer, and that's how I got my real chance, for a lady who drove a chariot in the summer acted in the winter. She took an interest in me and took me to see a manager, and asked him to give me a chance in some play. He put me into a road show with her. She was cross, but she made a man of me. Then they wanted an acrobatic comedian for this opera, and we're going to beat the record on a run in this city,' he said.

"But Joe had his setbacks after that. Regular roor-backs they were, too, the kind that were good for a fellow if he's young. The year that he had confidently expected to invade the 'Rialto' and capture everything in sight he was 'Props' in a barnstorming company in the mining camps of the Sierras. He was close to the ground, where he had started.

"It was Grimston's partner who had joined the group.

"While he was 'Props' he was dis-

charged when he was with 'The Phœnix' for not yelling 'Fire!' at the right time. They used him for the part of an Irishman that is killed in the first act. But he had to get off the stage somehow, although he was as dead as a herring, and manage the effects of a big fire scene that was one of the play's features. He managed to die close to the entrance and contrived to slowly edge his way off without being missed by the audience. When he was out of view of the audience he rushed to light the red fire. He blew into the tin tube of the flash-box, sending up quick flashes of light that with the help of the audience's imagination conveyed the illusion of wild, leaping flames. He broke in a door of the scene, rang an alarm bell, and then ran around to the front of the stage and got the curtain down on the picture. And all the while he kept working the flash-box.

"When the curtain had thumped to the stage and the audience was applauding, the stage manager rushed around, looking for Joe.

"'You —— lunatic! Why in the —— didn't you yell fire?' he shouted, choking with rage. 'I give you notice.'

"Joe has never been known to lose his temper. He laughed in the man's face and asked him if he took him for a hose company. But the notice stood.

"He joined another company of the same kind that was snow-bound in a mining camp. To make matters more devilish the theatre burnt down after the first night's performance. The company hadn't a dollar, and they couldn't move on account of the snow, and because of the landlord, who had begun to worry about the pay. Joe hocked his gold skates that he had won in a tournament and divided the proceeds royally, but that didn't last longer than a dewdrop in a kitchen fire. Finally he thought of something and talked it over with the landlord, who fell in thinking he saw a prospect of 'collecting,' after all. They rigged up a stage at the end of the dining-room and played matinée and night performances daily. The other storm-

bound guests saw the company's full repertoire and were glad to pay for being entertained. When the sun shone the next week and the company moved on, Joe was able to reclaim from the pawnbroker his beloved gold skates, the proud trophies of a skating tournament.

"At last the great year came when he invaded New York. He saw the city thoroughly and 'studied life' from nearly every standpoint. But he didn't get a job. The agents didn't care about him. He was big and rawboned and ungainly. They didn't care anything about the youthful enthusiasm in his eyes nor the queer three-cornered smile that was in itself a full equipment for a comedian. He did some stock work in Newark, but not by the grace of the agents. He 'went broke' several times and saved himself once by a fearful school of acting he started over there and made money out of.

"Then he began paying his attentions to managers instead of agents. They didn't care any more about him.

"'Nothing for you,' snarled one busy chap one morning.

"'Be careful,' Joe said, in warning. 'You may be turning away a new Salvini.'

"'No danger, I guess,' was the answer.

"One fellow that felt pretty bad that morning impaled him on his red eye and said:

"'No, there's nothing. Certainly not! and there never will be anything. Young man, you'd better go back West. That's where you belong!'

"'Thank you,' said Joe. 'I think I'll take your advice. I'll go'—and he flourished his arm awkwardly in the doorway—'but I return.'

"He went West and organized a company of his own without a dollar of capital. It stranded three times, but he always got it together again, and after a while it began to gain ground and to get free advertising. When he had come to be quite a great man in that section his company played in his native town. His father, who had been re-elected sheriff. as a kind of tribute to his honorable

career, was a proud and happy old man that night. It was a big house and a quietly appreciative house, but Joe was cut to the heart because there wasn't a single clap, not the ghost of a demonstration. When his father paid him a visit in his dressing-room before the last act he said:

"'It's the best imitation of a funeral I ever saw, father. Why don't they like me?'

"'They do; you're doing a killing with them,' said the old man. 'Why do you think they don't like you?'

"'Because they act as though they were dead. There hasn't been a sound from them all evening.'

"'Sound! I guess there wasn't! I made a speech in the town hall the day before yesterday and said to them: "Now, I've heard that some of the bad citizens of this town have been heard to say they would set the town on fire when my son plays here. All I've got to say is if there's so much as a whimper from one fellow in the hall, I and my posse will take him off to the jail, the scorn of all his fel-

lows." That's the reason they're so peaceable and law-abiding to-night.' And the old fellow strutted back to his duties and patrolled the aisle during the last act. The curtain fell upon a silent house and the audience walked out as decorously as though it was 'exiting' from a church.

"It was soon after this that Joe heard of an old theatre in the suburbs of New York that was about to be sold for a mortgage. He came on and bought in the old thing for a song. He furnished it up and brought his company from the West and made it a family amusement-house. The first season he was a little out of pocket. The second he was even, and the third he was ahead.

"Then he got an interest in my old theatre and we started a company on the road.

"In a year or two he got Miss Rogers and made her over, from a first-class leading woman into a star. She has made him and herself rich.

"Once, when he was in the midst of this prosperity, I said to him: 'Joe, old man, how does it feel?' He looked at me sorrowfully,

and said: 'D——n bad, Harry! I've lost something I'll never get back. The day before I became a manager I was a pretty fair actor; the day after, I was a rotten performer; the day before, I was a fine fellow; the day after, I was a rascal. It's surprising how authority sends a fellow down in the scale of goodness. I never had a taste for being execrated. I'm homesick for the old times when people liked me.'

"While he was getting his chain of theatres and four or five paying stars, Joe fought the syndicate. One morning he told me he had given up.

"'The fight has been bad for my people and bad for me,' he said. 'I'm going to follow the line of least resistance in business. I've joined the syndicate, and I'm going to fight it from within.'"

"I wonder if he's ahead of the game?" said another, who had joined the group.

"He doesn't know himself. He said so the other day. But I don't think he cares. There's nobody over him, anyway. It's something to be the 'Czar.'"

An Early Jump

An Early Jump

THEY were making an "early jump." To be strictly accurate, it were better to say they would have made an "early jump" had the train permitted. The train was late, the agent didn't know or wouldn't say how late. They had waited two and a half hours now, after rising at three o'clock. The situation had reached a poignant stage.

Mollie Shannon had walked to the extreme end of the long platform of the low, red-painted station. She had snubbed two or three members of the company who dared to be conversational. She drew her dark furs close around her pretty, petulant face, shrugged her shoulders, and looked down the curving track for the tardy engine.

"Jim" Hamilton and his wife were sauntering near.

"Your first trip South, Miss Shannon?" ventured Jim.

"My fourteenth," returned Miss Shannon, scarcely audibly without turning around.

"Come on. Don't bother her," whispered Mrs. Jim, looking at the "second lady" with something like apprehension.

"But I must talk or swear—and you are too sleepy to talk to me," persisted Jim, "and Miss Shannon looks as though she needs cheering up. This is our first trip through the South," he said, in what was intended to be a debonair tone.

"It's a country you can do very well without seeing," snapped Miss Shannon, still refusing to take her eyes from the far sweep of the track.

"I like the courtesy and warm-heartedness of the people. I liked the spirit of the audience last night. Not a snowball in it. True, their standards differ from ours."

"Yes." Miss Shannon was savage. "The

Southern women demand that their lovers be gentlemen. Northern women are content if they be men."

"The cooking at our hotel was good. The best fried chicken——"

"The cooking is degenerating in the South. And the hotel rooms are mere holes."

"This morning air is so soft," murmured Mrs. Jim, pacifically. "It is more like that of the Italian Riviera, than in any spot I have seen in the United States."

"You don't seem to be hungry," said Miss Shannon, lowering. "You must enjoy being routed out of bed at three and waiting three hours for a train at a vile station."

Mrs. Jim laughed. "Miss Shannon is tired of us," she said. "Let us see what the others are doing."

"They're scandalizing, of course." Miss Shannon smiled unpleasantly.

"We've been together eight weeks. It is then the backbiting begins in American companies. They have found out all there is to know about each other by that time."

"I think this is a very friendly company."

"As friends and companies go," and Miss Shannon resumed her study of the track.

"There's the test of a woman's temper," said Jim Hamilton, still frowning under his snubbing. "If she gets up ill-natured she's a shrew."

Again Mrs. Jim laughed. She had learned how a laugh dissipated an impending storm, and she used it effectively at times like this. The deep furrow between her husband's eyes almost disappeared.

"Never mind." His wife's cheek grazed his shoulder quite as if by accident.

"Your favorite motto again," he said, smiling. "It's a pretty good one in almost any emergency."

They strolled to another group. Mrs. Corwin, the old woman, was sitting on a packing-box. Alice Greely, juvenile, and Eleanor Lawton, soubrette, stood beside her laughing.

"I've been umpiring a game," said Mrs. Corwin, pointing to a wheelbarrow full of broken glass. "Eleanor has been sitting on

the wheel and Alice on the handles. One would jump off and watch the other save herself. A nice intellectual pursuit, isn't it? But that isn't the game. Each told me she had been sitting on the front of the wheelbarrow. Now, I leave it to you, Jim, which is the front of a wheelbarrow?"

"The wheel, of course."

"That's where I sat," said Alice Greely, in triumph.

"Jim Hamilton!" Miss Lawton struck a threatening attitude. "Do you mean to say that my arms are not on the front of my body?"

"Yours are, I believe."

"Then the arms or handles of a wheelbarrow——"

"A wheelbarrow wears his behind."

Miss Belle Errington, the leading woman, and Howard Loeser, the star, were passing. At the sound of laughter they turned grave, inquiring faces upon the group.

"What a gray morning!" Miss Errington shivered.

Eleanor Lawton smiled at her with sudden brightening of the eyes and flash of the teeth that were instant restoratives to good-humor for all who saw.

"It is gray because it is going to be golden in a little while. Do you see that glow over there on the rim of the world?" They followed the soubrette's whimsical glance and saw the faint, slow flush in the east.

The leading woman turned her fine eyes on the young woman. It seemed she had never really looked at Eleanor Lawton before. Faint memories of a cheeriness that never failed stirred within her. Why had she been too self-centred to notice this wholesome girl before? But then she belonged to the profession of egotists. Why should she be expected to think of others?

"You seem to distil drops of hope from any sort of a gloomy mixture," Miss Errington said, still looking kindly at the girl.

Eleanor Lawton blushed. The leading woman was as fine as she was remote. The

girl had admired her fervently for many a season without daring to say more than "Good-morning," "Good-night," or the lines of the play to her.

"What is the book you are carrying?" Miss Errington held out her hand for it.

Miss Lawton blushed hotly. "Not a diary," she protested. "I call it 'Help.' Good things that I hear or think, and can remember, I write in it. There are philosophical sayings, sentiments, even jokes. It is a hodge-podge of everything, and when I am lonesome I like to read it. It is a great comfort when we have an 'early jump.'"

"May I read from it?"

"Certainly."

"Aloud?"

"If you like."

Miss Errington turned the leaves slowly, scanning the girlish, irregular writing.

"Everyone has a third leg. It may be belief in some religion or philosophy. It may be only a great faith in a friend. But it is something outside of ourselves that we depend

upon. It is our support in the hard places and in the hard times of life."

The leading woman looked quickly from the book to its owner.

"You wrote that yourself?"

"Yes."

"And you believe it?"

"Yes."

"Who does not?" asked the leading man. "What is your third leg, Mrs. Corwin?"

"Christian Science, applied," said the old woman. "I have been living by it for several years. It is the prop our profession most needs. We should take our religion as we take our medicine, according to our particular needs. Methodism is needed for the emotional. Episcopalianism for the formal, Presbyterianism for the stern and the self-restrained, but Christian Science is for the fretful and the finical. It makes you say 'It doesn't matter' about the things that used to harass you. It makes them seem matters of comparative indifference if someone else gets the part you wanted yourself, and if some

ambitious young chap takes your scene from you. Our profession, more than any other, needs Christian Science, for there is no other that has so many petty annoyances. Science teaches you what trifles all those things are."

"But does it make one indifferent to his work?" Howard Loeser asked this with some apprehension, for he had a share in the management.

"On the contrary, it makes one a better actor, because it increases the sense of responsibility toward the management and the public. It helped a girl I know, who was undersized, to grow several inches taller, so that she might play leads."

The second comedian blew upon his fingers.

"I know this to be true, Tommy Trot," said the old woman, mildly. Everyone recalled that she had boxed the comedian's ears publicly three years before because he dared to doubt a statement of hers.

"It teaches one to divest a character of its personalities." Mollie Shannon was walking languidly nearer. "You don't say that any-

one you know is shrewish or selfish. You deal with qualities alone. You say ill-temper and selfishness are phantasms of the mortal mind. As they do not exist, you know no one who has them."

All eyes turned involuntarily toward Miss Shannon, then toward the east, where the sun was breaking gloriously from his prison behind the horizon.

"Like this," said Miss Errington, reading from Miss Lawton's "Help:" "A woman once set a rose-bush in the window of a dark room. The rose, turn it often as she might toward the gloom of the room, always twisted back toward the sunshine. We can train our natures to be like that rose, always reaching upward and outward to the sunlight, away from the darkness."

She turned a page. "Marcus Aurelius said something like 'Nothing in itself can hurt us. We have nothing to fear but our opinion of it.' At least that's what he meant, and I think he's the same dear old fellow who said that if we didn't like a thing we must simply

change our opinion of it; just turn around the headland and into the bay."

"May I have the book?" Miss Lawton turned the leaves quickly. "Doesn't this come near summing it all up?" she said. "This just came to me once, and I set it down and I've thought a great deal about it. 'The ultimate is always good.'"

"I have seen Christian Science turn men and women from intemperance, from insanity and suicide. I have seen it perform miracles, for I have known it to make people stop hating. The most fearful thing in the world is hatred. I believe it slays its thousands every year; not the persons who are hated, but those who hate. Do you know that a great chemist has proven by actual tests that violent hatred and anger cause a distinct chemical change in the human body? I have no doubt that people are hated to death every day. The only way to counteract the current is to send out thoughts of love and happiness to the race. The person so insulated cannot be slain, nor even hurt, by anyone's hatred."

"When I was in France I visited the famous miracle-working church at Lourdes," said Howard Loeser. "I went there simply because I wanted to see the place that had worked a wonder with Minnie Caswell. You all know that Minnie was on the débris heap four years ago. She had lost her voice, her beauty, her friends, and her hope. She was the most forlorn figure in Thespis land. In fact she didn't belong in the land any more. I might say that she had strayed beyond the border. She was always talking about Lourdes. 'They could make me over at Lourdes,' she said. The next thing I heard she had gone over in the steerage to Havre and from there to Lourdes. And you know where she is now? Right at the top in comic opera, and there to stay, too. So it is a question of any system or faith, after all, Mrs. Corwin?"

"It is developing the light within, in the way that is easiest for us all," admitted the old woman.

"Deep in our natures is a never-failing

spring of kindness to others and faith in the good. Pump it up. Keep on pumping," read Miss Errington from Eleanor Lawton's "Help."

"Fear nothing but hatred of your kind," Hannah More said. "If I had an enemy I should want him to hate someone." Mrs. Corwin smiled as she looked far over the soft Southern meadows. She slid off the trunk and made her way to Mollie Shannon, whom she joined in her walk.

Soon the second woman's face relaxed into a smile. Its strained look disappeared. It began to take on the soft contour of content.

"Did you know that Mrs. Corwin is a healer?" said Alice Greely, in a low voice. "She is treating poor Mollie Shannon for her 'blues' and her temper."

"How?"

Even doubting Tommy Trot was interested.

"Just by thinking," explained Alice. "Thinking hard that everything's all right with Mollie and with everyone and everything

else in the world. She says you can think people into anything good you want them to be."

"Provided you never allow yourself to lose hope and faith in them," added Eleanor.

"That's all right. I like that." Tommy Trot thought deeply for a moment. "Isn't the 'profesh' buying a reading-desk or pulpit or something for some sort of church somewhere?"

"Yes. The Second Church of Christ Scientist in New York."

"Let's fix up a contribution from the company," said Tommy.

"Good, Tommy. We'll do it. You shall be treasurer," said Loeser.

"Where shall I send it?"

"To Mrs. Beaumont Packard, New York."

"And this is finis in Miss Lawton's 'Help,'" read Miss Errington. "Ella Wheeler Wilcox, isn't it?"

"The tide of love swells in me with such force
It sweeps away all hate and all distrust,
As eddying straws and particles of dust
Are lost by some swift river in its course.

Love is a plant that we can cultivate
To grace and fragrance sweeter than the rose;
Or leave neglected while our heart still grows
Rank with that vile and poison nettle—hate.

Love is the law: but yield to its control,
And thou shalt find that all things work for best,
And in the calm, still heaven of thy breast
That God himself sits talking with thy soul."

"Hooray! There's the train!" shouted Tommy Trot.